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The Bibelot

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VOLUME VII.

Portland, Maine
THOMAS B. MOSHER
Mdccccı

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The Bibelot

THE *discovery of an unsuspected star in the poetic firmament may be said to date from the year 1887 when, in his delightful compilation,*[1] *the late Mr. Gleason White reprinted some thirty-five pieces signed by a "name that was new to us" — the name of W. E. Henley.*[2] *An immediate result of this "find" was the publication of* A Book of Verses *in 1888, followed in 1892 by* The Song of the Sword and other Verses, *a title since changed to* London Voluntaries.[3]

It may seem a trifle odd that such choice work found no mention in any one of Mr. Andrew Lang's delightful Letters on Literature *(1889); an oversight, we may surely believe, which has recently been made*

---

1 Ballades and Rondeaus . . . with Chapter on the Various Forms, (*London, 1887*).

2 *Contributed to "a society paper,* The London," *during 877-8. Quite a number of these poems have never been reprinted by Mr. Henley.*

3 *Now included under the title* Poems by William Ernest Henley, (*London, 1898*). In Hospital *as given by us is from the 1888 text. For a later series of lyrics see* Hawthorn and Lavender: Songs and Madrigals *in North American Review for November, 1899.*

up for in a very sufficient essay by Mr. Arthur Symons.[4]

Only the barest reference can here be given to what all the world may now read "writ large" concerning the friendship which existed between the poet of "rhymes and rhythms" and Robert Louis Stevenson.[5] *We are indeed told by the latter that "the hospital verses" were to have been dedicated to him, and in the* Envoy *to these poems we feel how very deeply the attachment was fostered and paid back in loving kind. Last of all the living singer bids farewell to this man greatly beloved in words of sorrowful sincerity:*

"O Death and Time, they chime and chime
Like bells at sunset falling! —
They end the song, they right the wrong,
They set the old echoes calling:
For Death and Time bring on the prime
Of God's own chosen weather,
And we lie in the peace of the Great Release
As once in the grass together."

---

4 *See "Modernity in Verse" in* Studies in Two Literatures, by Arthur Symons, (*London, 1897.*)

5 *In the revised and single volume re-issue of* Stevenson's Letters *this record of comradeship is now accessible to that wider public not always considered by the projectors of* editions de luxe.

FOR FEBRUARY:

GERARD DE NERVAL,
By
ARTHUR SYMONS.

In Hospital:
Rhymes and Rhythms.

On ne saurait dire à quel point un homme, seul dans son lit et malade, devient personnel.

BALZAC.

"ALIKE as a human document, and as an artistic experiment, the 'rhymes and rhythms' named 'In Hospital' have a peculiar value. Dated from the Old Edinburgh Infirmary, 1873-75, they tell the story of life in hospital, from the first glimpse of the 'tragic meanness' of stairs and corridors, through the horrors of the operation, by way of visitors, doctors, and patients, to the dizzy rapture of the discharge, the freedom of wind, sunshine, and the beautiful world. The poet to whom such an experience has come, the man, perhaps, whom such an experience has made a poet, must be accounted singularly fortunate. . . . To roam in the sun and air with vagabonds, to haunt the strange corners of cities, to know all the useless, and improper, and amusing people who are alone very much worth knowing; to live, as well as observe life; or, to be shut in hospital, drawn out of the rapid current of life into a sordid and exasperating inaction; to wait, for a time, in the ante-room of death: it is such things as these that make for poetry. . . . The very subject, to begin with, was a discovery. Here is verse made out of personal sensations, verse which is half physiological, verse which is pathology; and yet, at its best, poetry. . . . In these curious poems, the sonnets and the 'rhythms,' as Mr. Henley calls his unrhymed verse, he has etched a series of impressions which are like nothing else that I know in verse."

ARTHUR SYMONS.

I.

ENTER PATIENT.

The morning mists still haunt the stony street;
The northern summer air is shrill and cold;
And lo, the Hospital, gray, quiet, old,
Where life and death like friendly chafferers meet.
Thro' the loud spaciousness and draughty gloom
A small, strange child — so agèd yet so young! —
Her little arm besplinted and beslung,
Precedes me gravely to the waiting room.
I limp behind, my confidence all gone.
The gray-haired soldier-porter waves me on,
And on I crawl, and still my spirits fail:
A tragic meanness seems so to environ
These corridors and stairs of stone and iron,
Cold, naked, clean — half-workhouse and half-jail.

II.

WAITING.

A SQUARE, squat room (a cellar on promotion),
Drab to the soul, drab to the very daylight;
Plasters astray in unnatural-looking tinware;
Scissors and lint and apothecary's jars.

Here, on a bench a skeleton would writhe from,
Angry and sore, I wait to be admitted:
Wait till my heart is lead upon my stomach,
While at their ease two dressers do their chores.

One has a probe — it feels to me a crowbar.
A small boy sniffs and shudders after bluestone.
A poor old tramp explains his poor old ulcers.
Life is (I think) a blunder and a shame.

III.

INTERIOR.

The gaunt brown walls
Look infinite in their decent meanness.
There is nothing of home in the noisy kettle,
The fulsome fire.

The atmosphere
Suggests the haunt of a ghostly druggist.
Dressings and lint on the long, lean table—
Whom are they for?

The patients yawn,
Or lie as in training for shroud and coffin.
A nurse in the corridor scolds and wrangles.
It's grim and strange.

Far footfalls clank.
The bad burn waits with his head unbandaged.
My neighbour chokes in the clutch of chloral . . .
O a gruesome world!

IV.

BEFORE.

BEHOLD me waiting — waiting for the knife.
A little while, and at a leap I storm
The thick, sweet mystery of chloroform,
The drunken dark, the little death-in-life.
The gods are good to me: I have no wife,
No innocent child, to think of as I near
The fateful minute; nothing all-too dear
Unmans me for my bout of passive strife.
Yet am I tremulous and a trifle sick,
And, face to face with chance, I shrink a little:
My hopes are strong, my will is something weak.
Here comes the basket? Thank you. I am ready.
But, gentlemen my porters, life is brittle:
You carry Cæsar and his fortunes — steady!

V.

OPERATION.

You are carried in a basket,
Like a carcase from the shambles,
To the theatre, a cockpit,
Where they stretch you on a table.

Then they bid you close your eyelids,
And they mask you with a napkin,
And the anæsthetic reaches
Hot and subtle through your being.

And you gasp, and reel, and shudder
In a rushing, swaying rapture,
While the voices at your elbow
Fade — receding — fainter — farther.

Lights about you shower and tumble,
And your blood seems crystallising —
Edged and vibrant, yet within you
Racked and hurried back and forward.

Then the lights grow fast and furious,
And you hear a noise of waters,
And you wrestle, blind and dizzy,
In an agony of effort,

Till a sudden lull accepts you,
And you sound an utter darkness . . .
And awaken . . . with a struggle . . .
On a hushed, attentive audience.

VI.

AFTER.

LIKEAS a flamelet blanketed in smoke,
So through the anæsthetic shows my life;
So flashes and so fades my thought, at strife
With the strong stupor that I heave and choke
And sicken at, it is so foully sweet.
Faces look strange from space — and disappear.
Far voices, sudden loud, offend my ear —
And hush as sudden. Then my senses fleet:
All were a blank, save for this dull, new pain
That grinds my leg and foot; and brokenly
Time and the place glimpse on to me again;
And, unsurprised, out of uncertainty,
I wake — relapsing — somewhat faint and fain,
To an immense, complacent dreamery.

VII.

VIGIL.

LIVED on one's back,
In the long hours of repose
Life is a practical nightmare —
Hideous, asleep or awake.

Shoulders and loins
Ache - - - !
Ache, and the mattress,
Run into boulders and hummocks,
Glows like a kiln, while the bedclothes —
Tumbling, importunate, daft —
Ramble and roll, and the gas,
Screwed to its lowermost,
An inevitable atom of light,
Haunts, and a stertorous sleeper
Snores me to hate and despair.

All the old time
Surges malignant before me;
Old voices, old kisses, old songs
Blossom derisive about me;
While the new days
Pass me in endless procession:
A pageant of shadows
Silently, leeringly wending
On . . . and still on . . . still on.

Far in the stillness a cat
Languishes loudly. A cinder
Falls, and the shadows
Lurch to the leap of the flame. The next man to me
Turns with a moan; and the snorer,
The drug like a rope at his throat,
Gasps, gurgles, snorts himself free, as the night-nurse,
Noiseless and strange,
Her bull's-eye half-lanterned in apron,
(Whispering me, 'Are ye no sleepin' yet?')
Passes, list-slippered and peering,
Round . . . and is gone.

Sleep comes at last —
Sleep full of dreams and misgivings —.
Broken with brutal and sordid
Voices and sounds
That impose on me, ere I can wake to it,
The unnatural, intolerable day.

VIII.

STAFF-NURSE: OLD STYLE.

THE greater masters of the commonplace,
REMBRANDT and good SIR WALTER — only these
Could paint her all to you: experienced ease,
And antique liveliness, and ponderous grace;
The sweet old roses of her sunken face;
The depth and malice of her sly gray eyes;
The broad Scots tongue that flatters, scolds, defies;
The thick Scots wit that fells you like a mace.
These thirty years has she been nursing here,
Some of them under SYME, her hero still.
Much is she worth, and even more is made of her.
Patients and students hold her very dear.
The doctors love her, tease her, use her skill.
They say 'The Chief' himself is half-afraid of her.

IX.

LADY-PROBATIONER.

Some three, or five, or seven and thirty years;
A Roman nose; a dimpling double-chin;
Dark eyes and shy that, ignorant of sin,
Are yet acquainted, it would seem, with tears;
A comely shape; a slim, high-coloured hand,
Graced, rather oddly, with a signet ring;
A bashful air, becoming everything;
A well-bred silence always at command.
Her plain print gown, prim cap, and bright steel chain
Look out of place on her, and I remain
Absorbed in her, as in a pleasant mystery.
Quick, skilful, quiet, soft in speech and touch . . .
'Do you like nursing?' 'Yes, Sir, very much.'
Somehow, I rather think she has a history.

X.

STAFF-NURSE: NEW STYLE.

BLUE-EYED and bright of face, but waning fast
Into the sere of virginal decay,
I view her as she enters, day by day,
As a sweet sunset almost overpast.
Kindly and calm, patrician to the last,
Superbly falls her gown of sober gray,
And on her chignon's elegant array
The plainest cap is somehow touched with caste.
She talks BEETHOVEN; frowns disapprobation
At BALZAC's name, sighs it at 'poor GEORGE SAND's';
Knows that she has exceeding pretty hands;
Speaks Latin with a right accentuation;
And gives at need (as one who understands)
Draught, counsel, diagnosis, exhortation.

XI.

CLINICAL.

HIST? . . .
Through the corridor's echoes
Louder and nearer
Comes a great shuffling of feet.
Quick, every one of you,
Straighten your quilts, and be decent!
Here's the Professor.

In he comes first
With the bright look we know,
From the broad, white brows the kind eyes
Soothing yet nerving you. Here, at his elbow,
White-capped, white-aproned, the Nurse,
Towel on arm and her inkstand
Fretful with quills.
Here, in the ruck, anyhow,
Surging along,
Louts, duffers, exquisites, students, and prigs —
Whiskers and foreheads, scarf-pins and spectacles! —
Hustle the Class! And they ring themselves
Round the first bed, where the Chief
(His dressers and clerks at attention!)
Bends in inspection already.

So shows the ring
Seen, from behind, round a conjuror

Doing his pitch in the street.
High shoulders, low shoulders, broad shoulders, narrow ones,
Round, square, and angular, serry and shove;
While from within a voice,
Gravely and weightily fluent,
Sounds; and then ceases; and suddenly
(Look at the stress of the shoulders!)
Out of a quiver of silence,
Over the hiss of the spray,
Comes a low cry, and the sound
Of breath quick intaken through teeth
Clenched in resolve. And the Master
Breaks from the crowd, and goes,
Wiping his hands,
To the next bed, with his pupils
Flocking and whispering behind him.

Now one can see. Case Number One
Sits (rather pale) with his bed-clothes
Stripped up, and showing his foot
(Alas for God's image!)
Swaddled in wet, white lint
Brilliantly hideous with red.

XII.

ETCHING.

Two and thirty is the ploughman.
He's a man of gallant inches,
And his hair is close and curly,
And his beard;
But his face is wan and sunken,
And his eyes are large and brilliant,
And his shoulder-blades are sharp,
And his knees.

He is weak of wits, religious,
Full of sentiment and yearning,
Gentle, faded — with a cough
And a snoré.
When his wife (who was a widow,
And is many years his elder)
Fails to write, and that is always,
He desponds.

Let his melancholy wander,
And he'll tell you pretty stories
Of the women that have wooed him
Long ago;
Or he'll sing of bonnie lasses
Keeping sheep among the heather,
With a crackling, hackling click
In his voice.

XIII.

CASUALTY.

As with varnish red and glistening,
Dripped his hair; his feet were rigid;
Raised, he settled stiffly sideways:
You could see the hurts were spinal.

He had fallen from an engine,
And been dragged along the metals.
It was hopeless, and they knew it;
So they covered him, and left him.

As he lay, by fits half sentient,
Inarticulately moaning,
With his stockinged feet protruded
Sharp and awkward from the blankets,

To his bed there came a woman,
Stood and looked and sighed a little,
And departed without speaking,
As himself a few hours after.

I was told it was his sweetheart.
They were on the eve of marriage.
She was quiet as a statue,
But her lip was gray and writhen.

XIV.

AVE, CÆSAR!

From the winter's gray despair,
From the summer's golden languor,
Death, the lover of Life,
Frees us for ever.

Inevitable, silent, unseen,
Everywhere always,
Shadow by night and as light in the day,
Signs she at last to her chosen;
And, as she waves them forth,
Sorrow and Joy
Lay by their looks and their voices,
Set down their hopes, and are made
One in the dim Forever.

Into the winter's gray delight,
Into the summer's golden dream,
Holy and high and impartial,
Death, the mother of Life,
Mingles all men for ever.

XV.

'THE CHIEF.'

His brow spreads large and placid, and his eye
Is deep and bright, with steady looks that still.
Soft lines of tranquil thought his face fulfill —
His face at once benign and proud and shy.
If envy scout, if ignorance deny,
His faultless patience, his unyielding will,
Beautiful gentleness, and splendid skill,
Innumerable gratitudes reply.
His wise, rare smile is sweet with certainties,
And seems in all his patients to compel
Such love and faith as failure cannot quell.
We hold him for another Herakles,
Battling with custom, prejudice, disease,
As once the son of Zeus with Death and Hell.

XVI.

HOUSE-SURGEON.

EXCEEDING tall, but built so well his height
Half-disappears in flow of chest and limb;
Moustache and whisker trooper-like in trim;
Frank-faced, frank-eyed, frank-hearted; always bright
And always punctual — morning, noon, and night;
Bland as a Jesuit, sober as a hymn;
Humorous, and yet without a touch of whim;
Gentle and amiable, yet full of fight;
His piety, though fresh and true in strain,
Has not yet whitewashed up his common mood
To the dead blank of his particular Schism:
Sweet, unaggressive, tolerant, most humane,
Wild artists like his kindly elderhood,
And cultivate his mild Philistinism.

XVII.

INTERLUDE.

O THE fun, the fun and frolic
That *The Wind that Shakes the Barley*
Scatters through a penny whistle
Tickled with artistic fingers!

Kate the scrubber (forty summers,
Stout but sportive) treads a measure,
Grinning, in herself a ballet,
Fixed as fate upon her audience.

Stumps are shaking, crutch-supported;
Splinted fingers tap the rhythm;
And a head all helmed with plasters
Wags a measured approbation.

Of their mattress-life oblivious,
All the patients, brisk and cheerful,
Are encouraging the dancer,
And applauding the musician.

Dim the gases in the output
Of so many ardent smokers,
Full of shadow lurch the corners,
And the doctor peeps and passes.

There are, maybe, some suspicions
Of an alcoholic presence . . .
'Tak' a sup of this, my wumman!' . . .
New Year comes but once a twelvemonth.

XVIII.

CHILDREN: PRIVATE WARD.

HERE in this dim, dull, double-bedded room,
I am a father to a brace of boys,
Ailing, but apt for every sort of noise,
Bedfast, but brilliant yet with health and bloom.
Roden, the Irishman, is 'sievèn past,'
Blue-eyed, snub-nosed, chubby, and fair of face.
Willie's but six, and seems to like the place,
A cheerful little collier to the last.
They eat, and laugh, and sing, and fight, all day;
All night they sleep like dormice. See them play
At Operations:—Roden, the Professor,
Saws, lectures, takes the artery up, and ties;
Willie, self-chloroformed, with half-shut eyes,
Holding the limb and moaning—Case and Dresser.

XIX.

SCRUBBER.

She's tall and gaunt, and in her hard, sad face
With flashes of the old fun's animation,
There lowers the fixed and peevish resignation
Bred of a past where troubles came apace.
She tells me that her husband, ere he died,
Saw seven of their children pass away,
And never knew the little lass at play
Out on the green, in whom he's deified.
Her kin disbersed, her friends forgot and gone,
All simple faith her honest Irish mind,
Scolding her spoiled young saint, she labours on:
Telling her dreams, taking her patients' part,
Trailing her coat sometimes: and you shall find
No rougher, quainter speech, nor kinder heart.

XX.

VISITOR.

HER little face is like a walnut shell
With wrinkling lines; her soft, white hair adorns
Her either brow in quaint, straight curls, like horns;
And all about her clings an old, sweet smell.
Prim is her gown and quakerlike her shawl.
Well might her bonnets have been born on her.
Can you conceive a Fairy Godmother
The subject of a real religious call?
In snow or shine, from bed to bed she runs,
Her mittened hands, that ever give or pray,
Bearing a sheaf of tracts, a bag of buns,
All twinkling smiles and texts and pious tales:
A wee old maid that sweeps the Bridegroom's way,
Strong in a cheerful trust that never fails.

XXI.

ROMANCE.

'TALK of pluck!' pursued the Sailor,
Set at euchre on his elbow,
'I was on the wharf at Charleston,
Just ashore from off the runner.

'It was gray and dirty weather,
And I heard a drum go rolling,
Rub-a-dubbing in the distance,
Awful dour-like and defiant.

'In and out among the cotton,
Mud, and chains, and stores, and anchors,
Tramped a squad of battered scarecrows —
Poor old Dixie's bottom dollar!

'Some had shoes, but all had rifles,
Them that wasn't bald, was beardless,
And the drum was rolling *Dixie*,
And they stepped to it like men, sir!

'Rags and tatters, belts and bayonets,
On they swung, the drum a-rolling,
Mum and sour. It looked like fighting,
And they meant it too, by thunder!'

XXII.

PASTORAL.

'Tis the spring.
Earth has conceived, and her bosom,
Teeming with summer, is glad.

Thro' the green land,
Vistas of change and adventure,
The gray roads go beckoning and winding,
Peopled with wains, and melodious
With harness-bells jangling,
Jangling and twangling rough rhythms
To the slow march of the stately, great horses
Whistled and shouted along.

White fleets of cloud,
Argosies heavy with fruitfulness,
Sail the blue peacefully. Green flame the hedgerows.
Blackbirds are bugling, and white in wet winds
Sway the tall poplars.
Pageants of colour and fragrance,
Pass the sweet meadows, and viewless
Walks the mild spirit of May,
Visibly blessing the world.

O the brilliance of blossoming orchards!
O the savour and thrill of the woods,

When their leafage is stirred
By the flight of the angel of rain!
Loud lows the steer; in the fallows
Rooks are alert; and the brooks
Gurgle and tinkle and trill. Thro' the gloaming,
Under the rare, shy stars,
Boy and girl wander
Dreaming in darkness and dew.

It's the Spring.
A sprightliness feeble and squalid
Wakes in the ward, and I sicken,
Impotent, winter at heart.

XXIII.

MUSIC.

Down the quiet eve,
Thro' my window, with the sunset,
Pipes to me a distant organ
Foolish ditties;

And, as when you change
Pictures in a magic lantern,
Books, beds, bottles, floor, and ceiling
Fade and vanish,

And I'm well once more. . . .
August flares adust and torrid,
But my heart is full of April
Sap and sweetness.

In the quiet eve
I am loitering, longing, dreaming . . . .
Dreaming, and a distant organ
Pipes me ditties.

I can see the shop,
I can smell the sprinkled pavement,
Where she serves — her chestnut chignon
Thrills my senses.

O the sight and scent,
Wistful eve and perfumed pavement!
In the distance pipes an organ . . .
The sensation

Comes to me anew,
And my spirit, for a moment
Thro' the music breathes the blessèd
Air of London.

XXIV.

SUICIDE.

STARING corpselike at the ceiling,
See the harsh, unrazored features,
Ghastly brown against his pillow,
And the throat—so strangely bandaged!

Lack of work and lack of victuals,
A debauch of smuggled whisky,
And his children in the workhouse,
Made the world so black a riddle

That he plunged for a solution;
And, although his knife was edgeless,
He was sinking fast towards one,
When they came, and found, and saved him.

Stupid now with shame and sorrow,
In the night I hear him sobbing.
But sometimes he talks a little.
He has told me all his troubles.

In his face, so tanned and bloodless,
White and wide his eyeballs glitter;
And his smile, occult and tragic,
Makes you shudder when you see it.

XXV.

APPARITION.

THIN-LEGGED, thin-chested, slight unspeakably,
Neat-footed and weak-fingered: in his face —
Lean, large-boned, curved of beak, and touched with race,
Bold-lipped, rich-tinted, mutable as the sea,
The brown eyes radiant with vivacity —
There shines a brilliant and romantic grace,
A spirit intense and rare, with trace on trace
Of passion, impudence, and energy.
Valiant in velvet, light in ragged luck,
Most vain, most generous, sternly critical,
Buffoon and poet, lover and sensualist:
A deal of Ariel, just a streak of Puck,
Much Antony, of Hamlet most of all,
And something of the Shorter-Catechist.

XXVI.

ANTEROTICS.

LAUGHS the happy April morn
Thro' my grimy, little window,
And a shaft of sunshine pushes
Thro' the shadows in the square.

Dogs are romping thro' the grass,
Crows are cawing round the chimneys,
And among the bleaching linen
Goes the west at hide-and-seek.

Loud and cheerful clangs the bell.
Here the nurses troop to breakfast.
Handsome, ugly, all are women . . .
O the Spring — the Spring — the Spring!

XXVII.

NOCTURN.

At the barren heart of midnight,
When the shadow shuts and opens
As the loud flames pulse and flutter,
I can hear a cistern leaking.

Dripping, dropping, in a rhythm,
Rough, unequal, half-melodious,
Like the measures aped from nature
In the infancy of music;

Like the buzzing of an insect,
Still, irrational, persistent, . . .
I must listen, listen, listen
In a passion of attention;

Till it taps upon my heartstrings,
And my very life goes dripping,
Dropping, dripping, drip-drip-dropping,
In the drip-drop of the cistern.

XXVIII.

DISCHARGED.

CARRY me out
Into the wind and the sunshine,
Into the beautiful world.

O the wonder, the spell of the streets!
The stature and strength of the horses,
The rustle and echo of footfalls,
The flat roar and rattle of wheels!
A swift tram floats huge on us . . .
It's a dream?
The smell of the mud in my nostrils
Is brave—like a breath of the sea!

As of old,
Ambulant, undulant drapery,
Vaguely and strangely provocative,
Flutters and beckons. O yonder—
Scarlet!—the glint of a stocking!
Sudden a spire,
Wedged in the mist! O the houses,
The long lines of lofty, gray houses!
Cross-hatched with shadows and light,
These are the streets. . . .
Each is an avenue leading
Whither I will!

Free . . . !
Dizzy, hysterical, faint,
I sit, and the carriage rolls on with me
Into the wonderful world.

The Old Infirmary, Edinburgh, 1873–75.

ENVOY:

TO CHARLES BAXTER.

Do you remember
That afternoon — that Sunday afternoon! —
When, as the kirks were ringing in
And the gray city teemed
With Sabbath feelings and aspects,
LEWIS — our LEWIS then,
Now the whole world's! — and you,
Young, yet in shape most like an elder, came,
Laden with BALZACS
(Big, yellow books, quite impudently French)
The first of many times,
To that transformed back-kitchen where I lay
So long, so many centuries —
Or years, is it! — ago?

Dear CHARLES, since then
We have been friends, LEWIS and you and I,
(How good it sounds, 'LEWIS and you and I!'):
Such friends, I like to think
That in us three, Lewis and me and you,
Is something of that gallant dream
Which old DUMAS — the generous, the humane,
The seven-and-seventy times to be forgiven! —
Dreamed for a blessing to the race,
The immortal *Musketeers*.

Our ATHOS rests — the wise, the kind,
The liberal and august, his fault atoned,
Rests in the crowded yard
There at the west of Princes Street. We three —
You, I, and Lewis! — still afoot,
In chime so long, may keep
(God bless the thought!)
Unjangled till the end.

W. E. H.

CHISWICK, *March*, 1888.

The Bibelot

WHEN Walter Pater died the art of exquisite prose did not wholly die with him. It is the merit of Mr. Arthur Symons, friend and disciple of the dead master, that in a period of critical slack-water he is first and foremost "a man with something to say."[1] *To read one of his books is to read them all and having done so to rejoice in "fresh woods and pastures new."*[2]

The essay on Gérard de Nerval taken from The Symbolist Movement in Literature *(1899), which is his latest work, will make evident our contention. It stands alone as a sincere and sympathetic study of one who has truly been called "the most*

1 *"A Poet with something to say: Mr. Arthur Symons's 'Days and Nights.'" An unsigned article by Walter Pater in Pall Mall Gazette, March 23, 1889.*

2 *There are, in prose:* An Introduction to the Study of Browning, *1886;* Studies in Two Literatures, *1897;* Aubrey Beardsley, an Essay, *1898;* The Symbolist Movement in Literature, *1899. A fifth work entitled* Cities *is in preparation. In verse:* Days and Nights, *1889;* Silhouettes, *1892;* London Nights, *1895;* Silhouettes (*Second edition revised and enlarged*), *1896;* Amoris Victima, *1897;* Images of Good and Evil, *1899.*

beautiful of all the lost souls of the French Romance." For, as pointed out by Mr. Symons, not until 1897, when Mme. Avède Barine put forth a very sufficient exposition and analysis of De Nerval's mental make-up, the man remained unknown for what he was and will remain.

Sinister, indeed, the fate of many who led in the French Romantic Movement of 1830! Strange maladies, which from their multiplicity appear inseparable from all exotic flowering and decay in Art or Letters, beset them. In our own time similar phenomena reappear: from age to age are never wholly absent or eradicable.

For Gérard de Nerval, born to pass the torch along to Verlaine and Mallarmé, life may have seemed in all truth "the masque of Death's old comedy." The Vision Splendid deepened as the way darkened: to the end, despite the end as we know it, it was "music ever and evermore." If this music merged at last in utterance beyond interpretation it irked him not for whom Symbol had become the Thing itself—the Ideal made one and inseparable from the Real.

FOR MARCH:

THE CHURCHES OF NORTH FRANCE

By

WILLIAM MORRIS.

GÉRARD DE NERVAL
By
ARTHUR SYMONS.

GÉRARD DE NERVAL.

Of all that were thy prisons—ah, untamed,
Ah, light and sacred soul!—none holds thee now;
No wall, no bar, no body of flesh, but thou
Art free and happy in the lands unnamed,
Within whose gates, on weary wings and maimed,
Thou still would'st bear that mystic golden bough
The Sibyl doth to singing men allow,
Yet thy report folk heeded not, but blamed.

And they would smile and wonder, seeing where
Thou stood'st, to watch light leaves, or clouds, or wind,
Dreamily murmuring a ballad air,
Caught from the Valois peasants; dost thou find
A new life gladder than the old times were,
A love more fair than Sylvie, and as kind?

ANDREW LANG.

'EL' DESDICHADO.

I AM that dark, that disinherited,
That all dishonoured Prince of Aquitaine,
The Star upon my scutcheon long hath fled;
A black sun on my lute doth yet remain!
Oh, thou that didst console me not in vain,
Within the tomb, among the midnight dead,
Show me Italian seas, and blossoms wed,
The rose, the vine-leaf, and the golden grain.

Say, am I Love or Phoebus? have I been
Or Lusignan or Biron? By a Queen
Caressed within the Mermaid's haunt I lay,
And twice I crossed the unpermitted stream,
And touched on Orpheus' lute as in a dream,
Sighs of a Saint, and laughter of a Fay!

GÉRARD DE NERVAL,
(TRANSLATED BY ANDREW LANG.)

GÉRARD DE NERVAL.

I.

THIS is the problem of one who lost the whole world and gained his own soul. "I like to arrange my life as if it were a novel," wrote Gérard de Nerval, and, indeed, it is somewhat difficult to disentangle the precise facts of an existence which was never quite conscious where began and where ended that "overflowing of dreams into real life," of which he speaks. "I do not ask of God," he said, "that he should change anything in events themselves, but that he should change me in regard to things, so that I might have the power to create my own universe about me, to govern my dreams, instead of enduring them." The prayer was not granted, in its entirety; and the tragedy of his life lay in the vain endeavour to hold back the irresistible empire of the unseen, which it was the joy of his life to summon about him. Briefly, we know that Gérard Labrunie (the name de Nerval was taken from a little piece of property, worth some 1500 francs, which he liked to imagine had always been in the possession of his family) was born at Paris, May 22, 1808. His father was surgeon-

major; his mother died before he was old enough to remember her, following the *Grande Armée* on the Russian campaign; and Gérard was brought up, largely under the care of a studious and erratic uncle, in a little village called Montagny, near Ermenonville. He was a precocious schoolboy, and by the age of eighteen had published six little collections of verses. It was during one of his holidays that he saw, for the first and last time, the young girl whom he calls Adrienne, and whom, under many names, he loved to the end of his life. One evening she had come from the château to dance with the young peasant girls on the grass. She had danced with Gérard, he had kissed her cheek, he had crowned her hair with laurels, he had heard her sing an old song telling of the sorrows of a princess whom her father had shut in a tower because she had loved. To Gérard it seemed that already he remembered her, and certainly he was never to forget her. Afterwards, he heard that Adrienne had taken the veil; then, that she was dead. To one who had realised that it is "we, the living, who walk in a world of phantoms," death could not exclude hope;

and when, many years later, he fell seriously and fantastically in love with a little actress called Jenny Colon, it was because he seemed to have found, in that blonde and very human person, the re-incarnation of the blonde Adrienne.

Meanwhile Gérard was living in Paris, among his friends the Romantics, writing and living in an equally desultory fashion. *Le bon Gérard* was the best loved, and, in his time, not the least famous, of the company. He led, by choice, now in Paris, now across Europe, the life of a vagabond, and more persistently than others of his friends who were driven to it by need. At that time, when it was the aim of every one to be as eccentric as possible, the eccentricities of Gérard's life and thought seemed, on the whole, less noticeable than those of many really quite normal persons. But with Gérard there was no pose; and when, one day, he was found in the Palais-Royal, leading a lobster at the end of a blue ribbon, the visionary had simply lost control of his visions, and had to be sent to Dr. Blanche's asylum at Montmartre. He entered March 21, 1841, and came out, apparently well again, on the

21st of November. It would seem that this first access of madness was, to some extent, the consequence of the final rupture with Jenny Colon; on June 5, 1842, she died, and it was partly in order to put as many leagues of the earth as possible between him and that memory that Gérard set out, at the end of 1842, for the East. It was also in order to prove to the world, by his consciousness of external things, that he had recovered his reason. While he was in Syria, he once more fell in love with a new incarnation of Adrienne, a young Druse, Saléma, the daughter of a Sheikh of Lebanon; and it seems to have been almost by accident that he did not marry her. He returned to Paris at the end of 1843 or the beginning of 1844, and for the next few years he lived mostly in Paris, writing charming, graceful, remarkably sane articles and books, and wandering about the streets, by day and night, in a perpetual dream, from which, now and again, he was somewhat rudely awakened. When, in the spring of 1853, he went to see Heine, for whom he was doing an admirable prose translation of his poems, and told him he had come to return the money he had

received in advance, because the times were accomplished, and the end of the world, announced by the Apocalypse, was at hand, Heine sent for a cab, and Gérard found himself at Dr. Dubois' asylum, where he remained two months. It was on coming out of the asylum that he wrote *Sylvie*, a delightful idyl, chiefly autobiographical, one of his three actual achievements. On August 27, 1853, he had to be taken to Dr. Blanche's asylum at Passy, where he remained till May 27, 1854. Thither, after a month or two spent in Germany, he returned on August 8, and on October 19 he came out for the last time, manifestly uncured. He was now engaged on the narrative of his own madness, and the first part of *Le Rêve et la Vie* appeared in the *Revue de Paris* of January 1, 1855. On the 20th he came into the office of the review, and showed Gautier and Maxime du Camp an apron-string which he was carrying in his pocket. "It is the girdle," he said, "that Madame de Maintenon wore when she had *Esther* performed at Saint-Cyr." On the 24th he wrote to a friend: "Come and prove my identity at the police-station of the Châtelet." The night before he had been

working at his MS. in a pot-house of Les Halles, and had been arrested as a vagabond. He was used to such little misadventures, but he complained of the difficulty of writing. "I set off after an idea," he said, "and lose myself; I am hours in finding my way back. Do you know I can scarcely write twenty lines a day, the darkness comes about me so close!" He took out the apron-string. "It is the garter of the Queen of Sheba," he said. The snow was freezing on the ground, and on the night of the 25th, at three in the morning, the landlord of a "penny doss" in the Rue de la Vieille-Lanterne, a filthy alley lying between the quays and the Rue de Rivoli, heard some one knocking at the door, but did not open, on account of the cold. At dawn, the body of Gérard de Nerval was found hanging by the apron-string to a bar of the window.

It is not necessary to exaggerate the importance of the half-dozen volumes which make up the works of Gérard de Nerval. He was not a great writer; he had moments of greatness; and it is the particular quality of these moments which is of interest for us. There is the entertaining, but not more than

entertaining, *Voyage en Orient;* there is the estimable translation of *Faust*, and the admirable versions from Heine; there are the volumes of short stories and sketches, of which even *Les Illuminés*, in spite of the promise of its title, is little more than an agreeable compilation. But there remain three compositions: the sonnets, *Le Rêve et la Vie*, and *Sylvie;* of which *Sylvie* is the most objectively achieved, a wandering idyl, full of pastoral delight, and containing some folk-songs of Valois, two of which have been translated by Rossetti; *Le Rêve et la Vie* being the most intensely personal, a narrative of madness, unique as madness itself; and the sonnets, a kind of miracle, which may be held to have created something at least of the method of the later Symbolists. These three compositions, in which alone Gérard is his finest self, all belong to the periods when he was, in the eyes of the world, actually mad. The sonnets belong to two of these periods, *Le Rêve et la Vie* to the last; *Sylvie* was written in the short interval between the two attacks in the early part of 1853. We have thus the case of a writer, graceful and elegant when he is sane, but only inspired,

only really wise, passionate, collected, only really master of himself, when he is insane. It may be worth looking at a few of the points which so suggestive a problem presents to us.

II.

GÉRARD DE NERVAL lived the transfigured inner life of the dreamer. "I was very tired of life!" he says. And like so many dreamers, who have all the luminous darkness of the universe in their brains, he found his most precious and uninterrupted solitude in the crowded and more sordid streets of great cities. He who had loved the Queen of Sheba, and seen the seven Elohims dividing the world, could find nothing more tolerable in mortal conditions, when he was truly aware of them, than the company of the meanest of mankind, in whom poverty and vice, and the hard pressure of civilisation, still leave some of the original vivacity of the human comedy. The real world seeming to be always so far from him, and a sort of terror of the gulfs holding him, in spite of himself, to its flying skirts, he found something at all events realisable, concrete, in these drinkers of Les Halles, these vagabonds of the Place du Carrousel, among whom he so often sought refuge. It was literally, in part, a refuge. During the day he could sleep, but night wakened him, and that restlessness, which the night draws out

in those who are really under lunar influences, set his feet wandering, if only in order that his mind might wander the less. The sun, as he mentions, never appears in dreams; but, with the approach of night, is not every one a little readier to believe in the mystery lurking behind the world?

Crains, dans le mur aveugle, un regard qui t'épie!

he writes in one of his great sonnets; and that fear of the invisible watchfulness of nature was never absent from him. It is one of the terrors of human existence that we may be led at once to seek and to shun solitude; unable to bear the mortal pressure of its embrace, unable to endure the nostalgia of its absence. "I think man's happiest when he forgets himself," says an Elizabethan dramatist; and, with Gérard, there was Adrienne to forget, and Jenny Colon the actress, and the Queen of Sheba. But to have drunk of the cup of dreams is to have drunk of the cup of eternal memory. The past, and, as it seemed to him, the future were continually with him; only the present fled continually from under his feet. It was only by the effort of this contact with

people who lived so sincerely in the day, the minute, that he could find even a temporary foothold. With them, at least, he could hold back all the stars, and the darkness beyond them, and the interminable approach and disappearance of all the ages, if only for the space between tavern and tavern, where he could open his eyes on so frank an abandonment to the common drunkenness of most people in this world, here for once really living the symbolic intoxication of their ignorance.

Like so many dreamers of illimitable dreams, it was the fate of Gérard to incarnate his ideal in the person of an actress. The fatal transfiguration of the footlights, in which reality and the artificial change places with so fantastic a regularity, has drawn many moths into its flame, and will draw more as long as men persist in demanding illusion of what is real, and reality in what is illusion. The Jenny Colons of the world are very simple, very real, if one will but refrain from assuming them to be a mystery. But it is the penalty of all imaginative lovers to create for themselves the veil which hides from them the features of the beloved. It is

their privilege, for it is incomparably more entrancing to fancy oneself in love with Isis than to know that one is in love with Manon Lescaut. The picture of Gérard, after many hesitations, revealing to the astonished Jenny that she is the incarnation of another, the shadow of a dream, that she has been Adrienne and is about to be the Queen of Sheba; her very human little cry of pure incomprehension, *Mais vous ne m'aimez pas!* and her prompt refuge in the arms of the *jeune premier ridé*, if it were not of the acutest pathos, would certainly be of the most quintessential comedy. For Gérard, so sharp an awakening was but like the passage from one state to another, across that little bridge of one step which lies between heaven and hell, to which he was so used in his dreams. It gave permanency to the trivial, crystallising it, in another than Stendhal's sense; and when death came, changing mere human memory into the terms of eternity, the darkness of the spiritual world was lit with a new star, which was henceforth the wandering, desolate guide of so many visions. The tragic figure of Aurelia, which comes and goes through all

the labyrinths of dream, is now seen always "as if lit up by a lightning-flash, pale and dying, hurried away by dark horsemen."

The dream or doctrine of the re-incarnation of souls, which has given so much consolation to so many questioners of eternity, was for Gérard (need we doubt?) a dream rather than a doctrine, but one of those dreams which are nearer to a man than his breath. "This vague and hopeless love," he writes in *Sylvie*, "inspired by an actress, which night by night took hold of me at the hour of the performance, leaving me only at the hour of sleep, had its germ in the recollection of Adrienne, flower of the night, unfolding under the pale rays of the moon, rosy and blonde phantom, gliding over the green grass, half bathed in white mist. . . . To love a nun under the form of an actress! . . . and if it were the very same! It is enough to drive one mad!" Yes, *il y a de quoi devenir fou*, as Gérard had found; but there was also, in this intimate sense of the unity, perpetuity, and harmoniously recurring rhythm of nature, not a little of the inner substance of wisdom. It was a dream, perhaps refracted from some broken, illuminating angle by

which madness catches unseen light, that revealed to him the meaning of his own superstition, fatality, malady : — " During my sleep, I had a marvellous vision. It seemed to me that the goddess appeared before me, saying to me: 'I am the same as Mary, the same as thy mother, the same also whom, under all forms, thou hast always loved. At each of thine ordeals I have dropt yet one more of the masks with which I veil my countenance, and soon thou shalt see me as I am!'" And in perhaps his finest sonnet, the mysterious *Artemis*, we have, under other symbols, and with the deliberate inconsequence of these sonnets, the comfort and despair of the same faith.

La Treizième revient . . . C'est encor la première ;
Et c'est toujours la seule, — ou c'est le seul moment :
Car es-tu reine, ô toi ! la première ou dernière ?
Es-tu roi, toi le seul ou le dernier amant ? . . .

Aimez qui vous aima du berceau dans la bière ;
Celle que j'amai seul m'aime encor tendrement ;
C'est la mort — ou la morte . . . ô délice ! ô tourment !
La Rose qu'elle tient, c'est la Rose trémière.

Sainte napolitaine aux mains pleines de feux,
Rose au cœur violet, fleur de sainte Gudule :
As-tu trouvé ta croix dans le désert des cieux ?

Roses blanches, tombez ! vous insultez nos dieux:
Tombez, fantômes blancs, de votre ciel qui brûle:
—La Sainte de l'abîme est plus sainte à mes yeux !

Who has not often meditated, above all what artist, on the slightness, after all, of the link which holds our faculties together in that sober health of the brain which we call reason? Are there not moments when that link seems to be worn down to so fine a tenuity that the wing of a passing dream might suffice to snap it? The consciousness seems, as it were, to expand and contract at once, into something too wide for the universe, and too narrow for the thought of self to find room within it. Is it that the sense of identity is about to evaporate, annihilating all, or is it that a more profound identity, the identity of the whole sentient universe, has been at last realised? Leaving the concrete world on these brief voyages, the fear is that we may not have strength to return, or that we may lose the way back. Every artist lives a double life, in which he is for the most part conscious of the illusions of the imagination. He is conscious also of the illusion of the nerves, which he shares with every man of imaginative mind. Nights of insom-

nia, days of anxious waiting, the sudden shock of an event, any one of these common disturbances may be enough to jangle the tuneless bells of one's nerves. The artist can distinguish these causes of certain of his moods from those other causes which come to him because he is an artist, and are properly concerned with that invention which is his own function. Yet is there not some danger that he may come to confuse one with the other, that he may "lose the thread" which conducts him through the intricacies of the inner world?

The supreme artist, certainly, is the furthest of all men from this danger; for he is the supreme intelligence. Like Dante, he can pass through hell unsinged. With him, imagination is vision; when he looks into the darkness, he sees. The vague dreamer, the insecure artist and the uncertain mystic at once, sees only shadows, not recognising their outlines. He is mastered by the images which have come at his call; he has not the power which chains them for his slaves. "The kingdom of Heaven suffers violence," and the dreamer who has gone tremblingly into the darkness is in peril at the hands

of those very real phantoms who are the reflection of his fear.

The madness of Gérard de Nerval, whatever physiological reasons may be rightly given for its outbreak, subsidence, and return, I take to have been essentially due to the weakness and not the excess of his visionary quality, to the insufficiency of his imaginative energy, and to his lack of spiritual discipline. He was an unsystematic mystic; his "Tower of Babel in two hundred volumes," that medley of books of religion, science, astrology, history, travel, which he thought would have rejoiced the heart of Pico della Mirandola, of Meursius, or of Nicholas of Cusa, was truly, as he says, "enough to drive a wise man mad." "Why not also," he adds, "enough to make a madman wise?" But precisely because it was this *amas bizarre*, this jumble of the perilous secrets in which wisdom is so often folly and folly so often wisdom. He speaks vaguely of the Kabbala; the Kabbala would have been safety to him, as the Catholic Church would have been, or any other reasoned scheme of things. Wavering among intuitions, ignorances, half-truths, shadows of falsehood, now audacious,

now hesitating, he was blown hither and thither by conflicting winds, a prey to the indefinite.

Le Rêve et la Vie, the last fragments of which were found in his pockets after his suicide, scrawled on scraps of paper, interrupted with Kabbalistic signs and "a demonstration of the Imaculate Conception by geometry," is a narrative of a madman's visions by the madman himself, yet showing, as Gautier says, "cold reason seated by the bedside of hot fever, hallucination analysing itself by a supreme philosophic effort." What is curious, yet after all natural, is that part of the narrative seems to be contemporaneous with what it describes, and part subsequent to it; so that it is not as when De Quincey says to us, such or such was the opium-dream that I had on such a night; but as if the opium-dreamer had begun to write down his dream while he was yet within its coils. "The descent into hell," he calls it twice; yet does he not also write: "At times I imagined that my force and my activity were doubled; it seemed to me that I knew everything, understood everything; and imagination brought me infinite pleas-

ures. Now that I have recovered what men call reason, must I not regret having lost them?" But he had not lost them; he was still in that state of double consciousness which he describes in one of his visions, when, seeing people dressed in white, "I was astonished," he says, "to see them all dressed in white; yet it seemed to me that this was an optical illusion." His cosmical visions are at times so magnificent that he seems to be creating myths; and it is with a worthy ingenuity that he plays the part he imagines to be assigned to him in his astral influences.

"First of all I imagined that the persons collected in the garden (of the madhouse) all had some influence on the stars, and that the one who always walked round and round in a circle regulated the course of the sun. An old man, who was brought there at certain hours of the day, and who made knots as he consulted his watch, seemed to me to be charged with the notation of the course of the hours. I attributed to myself an influence over the course of the moon, and I believed that this star had been struck by the thunderbolt of the Most High, which had traced

on its face the imprint of the mask which I had observed.

"I attributed a mystical signification to the conversations of the warders and of my companions. It seemed to me that they were the representatives of all the races of the earth, and that we had undertaken between us to re-arrange the course of the stars, and to give a wider development to the system. An error, in my opinion, had crept into the general combination of numbers, and thence came all the ills of humanity. I believed also that the celestial spirits had taken human forms, and assisted at this general congress, seeming though they did to be concerned with but ordinary occupations. My own part seemed to me to be the re-establishment of universal harmony by Kabbalistic art, and I had to seek a solution by evoking the occult forces of various religions."

So far we have, no doubt, the confusions of madness, in which what may indeed be the symbol is taken for the thing itself. But now observe what follows:—

"I seemed to myself a hero living under the very eyes of the gods; everything in

nature assumed new aspects, and secret voices came to me from the plants, the trees, animals, the meanest insects, to warn and to encourage me. The words of my companions had mysterious messages, the sense of which I alone understood; things without form and without life lent themselves to the designs of my mind; out of combinations of stones, the figures of angles, crevices, or openings, the shape of leaves, out of colours, odours, and sounds, I saw unknown harmonies come forth. 'How is it,' I said to myself, 'that I can possibly have lived so long outside nature, without identifying myself with her! All things live, all things are in motion, all things correspond; the magnetic rays emanating from myself or others traverse without obstacle the infinite chain of created things: a transparent network covers the world, whose loose threads communicate more and more closely with the planets and the stars. Now a captive upon the earth, I hold converse with the starry choir, which is feelingly a part of my joys and sorrows.'"

To have thus realised that central secret of the mystics, from Pythagoras onwards, the secret which the Smaragdine Tablet of

Hermes betrays in its "As things are below, so are they above": which Boehme has classed in his teaching of "signatures," and Swedenborg has systematised in his doctrine of "correspondences"; does it matter very much that he arrived at it by way of the obscure and fatal initiation of madness? Truth, and especially that soul of truth which is poetry, may be reached by many roads; and a road is not necessarily misleading because it is dangerous or forbidden. Here is one who has gazed at light till it has blinded him; and for us all that is important is that he has seen something, not that his eyesight has been too weak to endure the pressure of light overflowing the world from beyond the world.

III.

And here we arrive at the fundamental principle which is at once the substance and the æsthetics of the sonnets "composed," as he explains, "in that state of meditation which the Germans would call 'super-naturalistic.'" In one, which I will quote, he is explicit, and seems to state a doctrine.

VERS DORÉS.

Homme, libre penseur ! te crois-tu seul pensant
Dans ce monde où la vie en toute chose ?
Des forces que tu tiens ta liberté dispose,
Mais de tous tes conseils l'univers est absent.

Respecte dans la bête un esprit agissant :
Chaque fleur est une ame à la Nature éclose ;
Un mystère d'amour dans le métal repose ;
" Tout est sensible ! " Et tout sur ton etre est puissant.

Crains, dans le mur aveugle, un regard qui t'épie !
A la matière meme un verbe est attaché . . .
Ne la fais pas servir à quelque usage impie !

Souvent dans l'être obscur habite un Dieu caché ;
Et comme un œil naissant couvert par ses paupières,
Un pur esprit s'accroît sous l'écorce des pierres !

But in the other sonnets, in *Artémis*, which I have quoted, in *El Desdichado*, *Myrtho*,

and the others, he would seem to be deliberately obscure; or at least, his obscurity results, to some extent, from the state of mind which he describes in *Le Rêve et la Vie:* "I then saw, vaguely drifting into form, plastic images of antiquity, which outlined themselves, became definite, and seemed to represent symbols, of which I only seized the idea with difficulty." Nothing could more precisely represent the impression made by these sonnets, in which, for the first time in French, words are used as the ingredients of an evocation, as themselves not merely colour and sound, but symbol. Here are words which create an atmosphere by the actual suggestive quality of their syllables, as, according to the theory of Mallarmé, they should do; as, in the recent attempts of the Symbolists, writer after writer has endeavoured to lure them into doing. Persuaded, as Gérard was, of the sensitive unity of all nature, he was able to trace resemblances where others saw only divergences; and the setting together of unfamiliar and apparently alien things, which comes so strangely upon us in his verse, was perhaps an actual sight of what it is our misfortune

not to see. His genius, to which madness had come as the liberating, the precipitating, spirit, disengaging its finer essence, consisted in a power of materialising vision, whatever is most volatile and unseizable in vision, and without losing the sense of mystery, or that quality which gives its charm to the intangible. Madness, then, in him, had lit up, as if by lightning-flashes, the hidden links of distant and divergent things; perhaps in somewhat the same manner as that in which a similarly new, startling, perhaps over-true sight of things is gained by the artificial stimulation of haschisch, opium, and those other drugs by which vision is produced deliberately, and the soul, sitting safe within the perilous circle of its own magic, looks out on the panorama which either rises out of the darkness before it, or drifts from itself into the darkness. The very imagery of these sonnets is the imagery which is known to all dreamers of bought dreams. *Rose au cœur violet, fleur de sainte Gudule; le Temple au péristyle immense; la grotte où nage la syrène:* the dreamer of bought dreams has seen them all. But no one before Gérard realised that such things as these might be

the basis of almost a new æsthetics. Did he himself realise all that he had done, or was it left for Mallarmé to theorise upon what Gérard had but divined?

That he made the discovery, there is no doubt; and we owe to the fortunate accident of madness one of the foundations of what may be called the practical æsthetics of Symbolism. Look again at that sonnet *Artémis*, and you will see in it not only the method of Mallarmé, but much of the most intimate manner of Verlaine. The first four lines, with their fluid rhythm, their repetitions and echoes, their delicate evasions, might have been written by Verlaine; in the later part the firmness of the rhythms and the jewelled significance of the words are like Mallarmé at his finest, so that in a single sonnet we may fairly claim to see a foreshadowing of the styles of Mallarmé and Verlaine at once. With Verlaine the resemblance goes, perhaps, no further; with Mallarmé it goes to the very roots, the whole man being, certainly, his style.

Gérard de Nerval, then, had divined, before all the world, that poetry should be a miracle; not a hymn to beauty, nor the

description of beauty, nor beauty's mirror; but beauty itself, the colour, fragrance, and form of the imagined flower, as it blossoms again out of the page. Vision, the overpowering vision, had come to him beyond, if not against, his will; and he knew that vision is the root out of which the flower must grow. Vision had taught him symbol, and he knew that it is by symbol alone that the flower can take visible form. He knew that the whole mystery of beauty can never be comprehended by the crowd, and that while clearness is a virtue of style, perfect explicitness is not a necessary virtue. So it was with disdain, as well as with confidence, that he allowed these sonnets to be overheard. It was enough for him to say: —

J'ai reve dans la grotte où nage la syrène;

and to speak, it might be, the syren's language, remembering her: "It will be my last madness," he wrote, "to believe myself a poet: let criticism cure me of it." Criticism, in his own day, even Gautier's criticism, could but be disconcerted by a novelty so unexampled. It is only now that the best critics in France are beginning to realise how

great in themselves, and how great in their influence, are these sonnets, which, forgotten by the world for nearly fifty years, have all the while been secretly bringing new æsthetics into French poetry.

NOTES.

I.

GÉRARD DE NERVAL.

(1808—1855.)

Napoléon et la France Guerrière, élégies nationales, 1826; *La mort de Talma*, 1826; *L'Académie, ou les Membres Introuvables, comédie satirique en vers*, 1826; *Napoléon et Talma, élégies nationales nouvelles*, 1826; *M. Dentscourt, ou le Cuisinier Grand Homme*, 1826; *Élégies Nationales et Satires Politiques*, 1827; *Faust, tragédie de Goethe*, 1828 (suivi du second *Faust*, 1840); *Couronne Poétique de Béranger*, 1828; *Le Peuple, ode*, 1830; *Poésies Allemandes, morceaux choisis et traduits*, 1830; *Choix de Poésies de Ronsard et de Regnier*, 1830; *Nos Adieux à la Chambre de Députés de l'an* 1830, 1831; *Lénore, traduite de Burger*, 1835; *Piquilo, opéra comique* (with Dumas), 1837; *L'Alchimiste, drame en vers* (with Dumas), 1839; *Léo Burckhardt, drame en prose* (with Dumas), 1839; *Scènes de la Vie Orientale*, 2 vols., 1848–1850; *Les Monténegrins, opéra comique* (with Alboize), 1849; *Le Chariot d'Enfant, drame en vers* (with Méry), 1850; *Les Nuits du Ramazan*, 1850; *Voyage en Orient*, 1851; *L'Imagier de Harlem, légende en prose et en vers* (with Méry and Bernard Lopez), 1852; *Contes et Facéties*, 1852; *Lorely, souvenirs d'Allemange*, 1852; *Les Illuminés*, 1852; *Petits Châteux de Bohême*, 1853; *Les Filles du Feu*, 1854; *Misanthropie et Repentir, drame de Kotzebue*, 1855; *La Bohème galante*, 1855; *Le Rêve et la Vie: Aurélia*, 1855; *Le Marquis de Fayolle* (with E. Gorges), 1856; *Œuvres Complètes*, 6 vols.,

(1, *Les Deux Faust de Goethe*; 2, 3, *Voyage en Orient*; 4, *Les Illuminés, Les Faux Saulniers*; 5, *Le Rêve et la Vie, les Filles du Feu, La Bohême galante*; 6, *Poésies Complètes*), 1867.

The sonnets, written at different periods and never published during the lifetime of Gérard, are contained in the volume of *Poésies Complètes*, where they are imbedded in the midst of deplorable juvenilia. All, or almost all, of the verse worth preserving was collected, in 1897, by that delicate amateur of the curiosities of beauty, M. Remy de Gourmont, in a tiny volume called *Les Chimères*, which contains the seven sonnets of "Les Chimères," the sonnet called "Vers Dorés," the five sonnets of "Le Christ aux Oliviers," and, in facsimile of the autograph, the lyric called "Les Cydalises." The true facts of the life of Gérard have been told for the first time, from original documents, by Mme. Arvède Barine, in two excellent articles in the *Revue de Deux Mondes*, October 15, and November 1, 1897, since reprinted in *Les Nevrosés*, 1898.

[The exquisite Conquet edition of *Sylvie* (Paris, 1886) is seldom met with now save on the shelves of the collector. The English re-issue gives no adequate notion of the beauty of this lovely book. Our *Old World* reprint is the only available edition that has merits of its own both as translation and as a piece of book-making.]

II.

TRANSLATIONS OF SONNETS.

I.

VERS DORÉS.

O atheist man! are you the only one imbued
With thought, on earth where everything with life's a-teem?
Though license give your forces fuller scope, 'twould seem
No Universe within your counsels you include.

In every beast may'st note a mind with thought indued;
Each flower is a soul in Nature's ample scheme;
With mysteries of love her steely metals gleam;
"All things are sentient!" and your lesser powers elude.

Behold within the sightless wall a watchful eye!
Somewhat of Trinity within all matter hides. . .
To impious uses, therefore, turn it not awry!

Oft in the lowliest Earth-born, hidden, God abides;
And like the nascent eye beneath the eyelids fold,
The stone's close sheath a spirit pure doth hold.

II.

ARTÉMIS.

The thirteenth loved returns . . . 'Tis e'er the first love knows;
Alway the only one, — alway the only hour unflown:
For art thou queen, O thou! the first or last of those?
Or art thou king, thou first or last on lover's throne? . . .

Give love to those who love from cradle to life's close;
Who hath mine only love still loveth me alone;
'Tis Death — or death's consort . . . O rapture! O torment unknown!
The Rose of Allah bringing, — 'tis the mallow Rose.

Thou saint Neapolitan, whose hands the torch uprise,
Thou violet-hearted Rose, the flower of saint Gudule:
Hast found thy cross within the desert-waste of skies?

Ye roses white, avaunt! 'tis Love that deifies:
Avaunt ye phantoms white, from heaven where flame holds rule:
The saints of Hell more saintly are unto mine eyes!

In rendering these two sonnets I have but sought to retain the echoing consonances of the originals, (which Mr. Symons so truly notes,) and divine the symbolistic conception of the author who sometimes wandered so far afield. Perhaps the attempt is unavailing and presumptuous, for music and color depart and the hidden still remains obscure.

A. LENALIE.

III.

Another translation of *Artémis* is that given by W. J. Robertson in *A Century of French Verse*, (London, 1895).

The thirteenth comes again! . . . She is, moreover,
The first and sole — or one sole moment seen:
O thou! the first or last, art thou the queen?
Art thou the king, thou sole or the last lover? . . .

Love thou whose love thy birth and bier did cover;
She whom I loved loves me no less, I ween:
Death — or one dead — O ecstasy! O teen!
On the dusk rose she holds dense shadows hover.

Pale Saint-Gudule, whose hands are full of flame,
Whose breast the purple-hearted rose doth cherish;
Hast thou too found thy cross in wasted skies? . . .

White roses fall! Ye flout our Gods with shame:
White phantoms fall from burning heavens and perish;
The saint of Hell is holier in these eyes!

The Bibelot

"In the article on Amiens Cathedral, the intense love and wonderful knowledge Morris had of the Middle Ages, of French Gothic, and of that particular church, which was always to him the crown and flower of the whole world's architecture, expressed themselves in what is perhaps even yet the noblest and most loving tribute ever paid to the great Cathedral. It was not written without violent struggles. 'I am to have a grind about Amiens Cathedral this time,' he writes from home on the 11th of January,[1] *'it is very poor and inadequate, I cannot help it; it has cost me more trouble than anything I have written yet; I ground at it the other night from nine o'clock till half past four a. m., when the lamp went out, and I had to creep upstairs to bed through the great dark house like a thief.' The praise of Amiens has been written by many different pens; but no one has ever written on it with such white heat of enthusiasm and such wealth of detailed insight. Every word of what*

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1 *This was in 1856. The essay appeared in* The Oxford and Cambridge Magazine *for February.*

he writes comes straight from his heart. 'I thought,' he says, with simple and unashamed modesty, 'that even if I could say nothing else about these grand churches, I could at least tell men how I loved them. For I will say here that I think these same churches of North France the grandest, the most beautiful, the kindest and most loving of all the buildings that the earth has ever borne.'

This article is headed 'The Churches of North France. No. I.' It would seem that Morris had meant to write a series of articles on these churches, but there is no trace of his having begun a second. . . . The essay on Amiens has neither the fluent grace nor the uncertain touch of the tales; it is wrought as if with chisel strokes, precise and yet passionate." [2]

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2 The Life of William Morris. By J. W. Mackail. (2 *vols., 8vo, London, 1899*), *Vol. I, pp. 96, 97. See also Vol. II, pp. 261, 300.*

FOR APRIL:

LYRICS FROM 'IONICA'

By

WILLIAM CORY.

THE CHURCHES OF NORTH FRANCE. NO. I.

By

WILLIAM MORRIS.

"MORRIS'S first Long Vacation. that of 1853, was spent in England, largely in going about visiting churches. . . . In the Long Vacation of 1854 he made his first journey abroad, to Belgium and Northern France. This journey was one of profound interest: it introduced him to the painting of Van Eyck and Memling . . . and to what he considered the noblest works of human invention, the churches of Amiens, Beauvais, and Chartres.

'Less than forty years ago,' he writes in one of the frankly and beautifully autobiographic passages of 'The Aims of Art,' 'I first saw the city of Rouen, then still in it outward aspect a piece of the Middle Ages: no words can tell you how its mingled beauty, history, and romance took hold on me; I can only say that, looking back on my past life, I find it was the greatest pleasure I have ever had: and now it is a pleasure which no one can ever have again: it is lost to the world for ever. At that time I was an undergraduate of Oxford. Though not so astounding, so romantic, or at first sight so mediæval as the Norman city, Oxford in those days still kept a great deal of its earlier loveliness: and the memory of its grey streets as they then were has been an abiding influence and pleasure in my life, and would be greater still if I could only forget what they are now — a matter of far more importance than the so-called learning of the place could have been to me in any case, but which, as it was, no one tried to teach me, and I did not try to learn.'

As deep a love, and one that to the end of his life kept all its first freshness and passion, he felt for the common country of Northern France, the soil out of which sprang those radiant cities and glorious churches."

J. W. MACKAIL.

THE CHURCHES OF NORTH FRANCE.

I.

SHADOWS OF AMIENS.

NOT long ago I saw for the first time some of the churches of North France; still more recently I saw them for the second time; and, remembering the love I have for them and the longing that was in me to see them, during the time that came between the first and second visit, I thought I should like to tell people of some of those things I felt when I was there; — there among those mighty tombs of the long-dead ages.

And I thought that even if I could say nothing else about these grand churches, I could at least tell men how much I loved them; so that, though they might laugh at me for my foolish and confused words, they might yet be moved to see what there was that made me speak my love, though I could give no reason for it.

For I will say here that I think those same churches of North France the grandest, the most beautiful, the kindest and most loving of all the buildings that the earth has ever borne; and, thinking of their past-away

builders, can I see through them, very faintly, dimly, some little of the mediæval times, else dead, and gone from me for ever, —voiceless for ever.

And those same builders, still surely living, still real men, and capable of receiving love, I love no less than the great men, poets and painters and such like, who are on earth now, no less than my breathing friends whom I can see looking kindly on me now. Ah! do I not love them with just cause, who certainly loved me, thinking of me sometimes between the strokes of their chisels; and for this love of all men that they had, and moreover for the great love of God, which they certainly had too; for this, and for this work of theirs, the upraising of the great cathedral front with its beating heart of the thoughts of men, wrought into the leaves and flowers of the fair earth; wrought into the faces of good men and true, fighters against the wrong, of angels who upheld them, of God who rules all things; wrought through the lapse of years, and years, and years, by the dint of chisel, and stroke of hammer, into stories of life and death, the second life, the second death, stories of God's dealing in

love and wrath with the nations of the earth, stories of the faith and love of man that dies not: for their love, and the deeds through which it worked, I think they will not lose their reward.

So I will say what I can of their works, and I have to speak of Amiens first, and how it seemed to me in the hot August weather.

I know how wonderful it would look, if you were to mount one of the steeples of the town, or were even to mount up to the roof of one of the houses westward of the cathedral; for it rises up from the ground, grey from the paving of the street, the cavernous porches of the west front opening wide, and marvellous with the shadows of the carving you can only guess at; and above stand the kings, and above that you would see the twined mystery of the great flamboyant rose window with its thousand openings, and the shadows of the flower-work carved round it, then the grey towers and gable, grey against the blue of the August sky, and behind them all, rising high into the quivering air, the tall spire over the crossing.

But from the hot Place Royale here with its stunted pollard acacias, and statue of some one, I know not whom, but some citizen of Amiens I suppose, you can see nothing but the graceful spire; it is of wood covered over with lead, and was built quite at the end of the flamboyant times. Once it was gilt all over, and used to shine out there, getting duller and duller, as the bad years grew worse and worse; but the gold is all gone now; when it finally disappeared I know not, but perhaps it was in 1771, when the chapter got them the inside of their cathedral whitewashed from vaulting to pavement.

The spire has two octagonal stages above the roof, formed of trefoiled arches, and slim buttresses capped by leaded figures; from these stages the sloping spire springs with crocketted ribs at the angles, the lead being arranged in a quaint herring-bone pattern; at the base of the spire too is a crown of open-work and figures, making a third stage; finally, near the top of the spire the crockets swell, till you come to the rose that holds the great spire-cross of metal-work, such metal-work as the French alone knew how to make; it is all beautiful, though so late.

From one of the streets leading out of the Place Royale you can see the cathedral, and as you come nearer you see that it is clear enough of houses or such like things; the great apse rises over you, with its belt of eastern chapels; first the long slim windows of these chapels, which are each of them little apses, the Lady Chapel projecting a good way beyond the rest, and then, running under the cornice of the chapels and outer aisles all round the church, a cornice of great noble leaves; then the parapets in changing flamboyant patterns, then the conical roofs of the chapels hiding the exterior tracery of the triforium, then the great clerestory windows, very long, of four lights, and stilted, the tracery beginning a long way below the springing of their arches; and the buttresses are so thick, and their arms spread so here, that each of the clerestory windows looks down its own space between them, as if between walls: above the windows rise their canopies running through the parapet, and above all the great mountainous roof, and all below it, and around the windows and walls of the choir and apse, stand the mighty army of the buttresses, holding up the weight of

the stone roof within with their strong arms for ever.

We go round under their shadows, past the sacristies, past the southern transept, only glancing just now at the sculpture there, past the chapels of the nave, and enter the church by the small door hard by the west front, with that figure of huge St. Christopher quite close over our heads; thereby we enter the church, as I said, and are in its western bay. I think I felt inclined to shout when I first entered Amiens cathedral; it is so free and vast and noble, I did not feel in the least awe-struck, or humbled by its size and grandeur. I have not often felt thus when looking on architecture, but have felt, at all events, at first, intense exultation at the beauty of it; that, and a certain kind of satisfaction in looking on the geometrical tracery of the windows, on the sweeping of the huge arches, were, I think, my first feelings in Amiens Cathedral.

We go down the nave, glancing the while at the traceried windows of the chapels, which are later than the windows above them; we come to the transepts, and from either side the stained glass, in their huge

windows, burns out on us; and, then, first we begin to appreciate somewhat the scale of the church, by looking up, along the ropes hanging from the vaulting to the pavement, for the tolling of the bells in the spire.

There is a hideous renaissance screen, of solid stone or marble, between choir and nave, with more hideous iron gates to it, through which, however, we, walking up the choir steps, can look and see the gorgeous carving of the canopied stalls; and then, alas! 'the concretion of flattened sacks, rising forty feet above the altar;' but, above that, the belt of the apse windows, rich with sweet mellowed stained glass, under the dome-like roof.

The stalls in the choir are very rich, as people know, carved in wood, in the early sixteenth century, with high twisted canopies, and histories, from the Old Testament mostly, wrought about them. The history of Joseph I remember best among these. Some of the scenes in it I thought very delightful; the story told in such a gloriously quaint, straightforward manner. Pharaoh's dream, how splendid that was! the king lying asleep on his elbow, and the kine coming up

to him in two companies. I think the lean kine was about the best bit of wood-carving I have seen yet. There they were, a writhing heap, crushing and crowding one another, drooping heads and starting eyes, and strange angular bodies; altogether the most wonderful symbol of famine ever conceived. I never fairly understood Pharaoh's dream till I saw the stalls at Amiens.

There is nothing else to see in the choir; all the rest of the fittings being as bad as possible. So we will go out again, and walk round the choir-aisles. The screen round the choir is solid, the upper part of it carved (in the flamboyant times), with the history of St. John the Baptist, on the north side; with that of St. Firmin on the south. I remember very little of the sculptures relative to St. John, but I know that I did not like them much. Those about St. Firmin, who evangelized Picardy, I remember much better, and some of them especially I thought very beautiful; they are painted too, and at any rate one cannot help looking at them.

I do not remember, in the least, the order in which they come, but some of them are fixed well enough in my memory; and,

principally, a bishop, (St. Firmin,) preaching, rising out of a pulpit from the midst of the crowd, in his jewelled cope and mitre, and with a beautiful sweet face. Then another, the baptizing of the king and his lords, was very quaint and lifelike. I remember, too, something about the finding of St. Firmin's relics, and the translation of the same relics when found; the many bishops, with their earnest faces, in the first, and the priests, bearing the reliquaries, in the second; with their long vestments girded at the waist and falling over their feet, painted too, in light colours, with golden flowers on them. I wish I remembered these carvings better, I liked them so much. Just about this place, in the lower part of the screen, I remember the tomb of a priest, very gorgeous, with gold and colours; he lay in a deep niche, under a broad segmental arch, which is painted with angels; and, outside this niche, angels were drawing back painted curtains, I am sorry to say. But the priest lay there in cope and alb, and the gentle colour lay over him, as his calm face gazed ever at the angels painted in his resting-place. I have dim recollection of seeing, when I was at

Amiens before, not this last time, a tomb, which I liked much, a bishop, I think it was, lying under a small round arch, but I forget the figure now. This was in a chapel on the other side of the choir. It is very hard to describe the interior of a great church like this, especially since the whitewash (applied, as I said, on this scale in 1771) lies on everything so; before that time, some book says, the church was painted from end to end with patterns of flowers and stars, and histories: think — I might have been able to say something about it then, with that solemn glow of colour all about me, as I walked there from sunrise to sunset; and yet, perhaps, it would have filled my heart too full for speaking, all that beauty; I know not.

Up into the triforium, and other galleries, sometimes in the church, sometimes in narrow passages of close-fitting stone, sometimes out in the open air; up into the forest of beams between the slates and the real stone roof: one can look down through a hole in the vaulting and see the people walking and praying on the pavement below, looking very small from that height, and strangely foreshortened. A strange sense of oppres-

sion came over me at that time, when, as we were in one of the galleries of the west front, we looked into the church, and found the vaulting but a foot or two (or it seemed so) above our heads; also, while I was in the galleries, now out of the church, now in it, the canons had begun to sing complines, and the sound of their singing floated dimly up the winding stair-cases and half-shut doors.

The sun was setting when we were in the roof, and a beam of it, striking through the small window up in the gable, fell in blood-red spots on the beams of the great dim roof. We came out from the roof on to the parapet in the blaze of the sun, and then going to the crossing, mounted as high as we could into the spire, and stood there a while looking down on the beautiful country, with its many water-meadows, and feathering trees.

And here let me say something about the way in which I have taken this description upon me; for I did not write it at Amiens; moreover, if I had described it from the bare reminiscences of the church, I should have been able to say little enough about the most interesting part of all, the sculptures,

namely; so, though remembering well enough the general effect of the whole, and, very distinctly, statues and faces, nay, leaves and flower-knots, here and there; yet, the external sculpture I am describing as well as I can from such photographs as I have; and these, as everybody knows, though very distinct and faithful, when they show anything at all, yet, in some places, where the shadows are deep, show simply nothing. They tell me, too, nothing whatever of the colour of the building; in fact, their brown and yellow is as unlike as possible to the grey of Amiens. So, for the facts of form, I have to look at my photographs; for facts of colour I have to try and remember the day or two I spent at Amiens, and the reference to the former has considerably dulled my memory of the latter. I have something else to say, too; it will seem considerably ridiculous, no doubt, to many people who are well acquainted with the iconography of the French churches, when I talk about the stories of some of the carvings; both from my want of knowledge as to their meaning, and also from my telling people things which everybody may be supposed to know; for which I pray forgiveness,

and so go on to speak of the carvings about the south transept door.

It is divided in the midst by a pillar, whereon stands the Virgin, holding our Lord. She is crowned, and has a smile upon her face now for ever; and in the canopy above her head are three angels, bearing up the aureole there; and about these angels, and the aureole and head of the Virgin, there is still some gold and vermilion left. The Holy Child, held in His mother's left arm, is draped from his throat to his feet, and between His hands He holds the orb of the world. About on a level with the Virgin, along the sides of the doorway, are four figures on each side, the innermost one on either side being an angel holding a censer; the others are ecclesiastics, and (some book says) benefactors to the church. They have solemn faces, stern, with firm close-set lips, and eyes deep-set under their brows, almost frowning, and all but one or two are beardless, though evidently not young; the square door valves are carved with deep-twined leaf-mouldings, and the capitals of the door-shafts are carved with varying knots of leaves and flowers. Above the Virgin, up

in the tympanum of the doorway, are carved the Twelve Apostles, divided into two bands of six, by the canopy over the Virgin's head. They are standing in groups of two, but I do not know for certain which they are, except, I think, two, St. James and St. John; the two first in the eastern division. James has the pilgrim's hat and staff, and John is the only beardless one among them; his face is rather sad, and exceedingly lovely, as, indeed are all those faces, being somewhat alike; and all, in some degree like the type of face received as the likeness of Christ himself. They have all long hair falling in rippled bands on each side of their faces, on to their shoulders. Their drapery, too, is lovely; they are very beautiful and solemn. Above their heads runs a cornice of trefoiled arches, one arch over the head of each apostle; from out of the deep shade of the trefoils flashes a grand leaf cornice, one leaf again to each apostle; and so we come to the next compartment, which contains three scenes from the life of St. Honoré, an early French bishop. The first scene is, I think, the election of a bishop, the monks or priests talking the matter over in chapter first, then

going to tell the bishop-elect. Gloriously-draped figures the monks are, with genial faces full of good wisdom, drawn into quaint expressions by the joy of argument. This one old, and has seen much of the world; he is trying, I think, to get his objections answered by the young man there, who is talking to him so earnestly; he is listening, with a half-smile on his face, as if he had made up his mind, after all. These other two, one very energetic indeed, with his head and shoulders swung back a little, and his right arm forward, and the other listening to him, and but half-convinced yet. Then the two next, turning to go with him who is bearing to the new-chosen bishop the book of the Gospels and pastoral staff; they look satisfied and happy. Then comes he with the pastoral staff and Gospels; then, finally, the man who is announcing the news to the bishop himself, the most beautiful figure in the whole scene, perhaps, in the whole doorway; he is stooping down, lovingly, to the man they have chosen, with his left hand laid on his arm, and his long robe falls to his feet from his shoulder all along his left side, moulded a little to the shape of his body, but falling

heavily and with scarce a fold in it, to the ground: the chosen one sitting there, with his book held between his two hands, looks up to him with his brave face, and he will be bishop, and rule well, I think. So, by the next scene he is bishop, I suppose, and is sitting there ordering the building of a church; for he is sitting under a trefoiled canopy, with his mitre on his head, his right hand on a reading-desk by his side. His book is lying open, his head turned toward what is going forwards. It is a splendid head and face. In the photograph I have of this subject, the mitre, short and simple, is in full light but for a little touch of shade on one side; the face is shaded, but the crown of short crisp curls hanging over it, about half in light, half in shade. Beyond the trefoil canopy comes a wood of quaint conventional trees, full of stone, with a man working at it with a long pick: I cannot see his face, as it is altogether in shade, the light falling on his head however. He is dressed in a long robe, quite down to his feet, not a very convenient dress, one would think, for working in. I like the trees here very much; they are meant for hawthorns and oaks.

There are a very few leaves on each tree, but at the top they are all twisted about, and are thicker, as if the wind were blowing them. The little capitals of the canopy, under which the bishop is sitting, are very delightful, and are common enough in larger work of this time (thirteenth century) in France. Four bunches of leaves spring from long stiff stalks, and support the square abacus, one under each corner. The next scene, in the division above, is some miracle or other, which took place at mass, it seems. The bishop is saying mass before an altar; behind him are four assistants; and, as the bishop stands there with his hand raised, a hand coming from somewhere by the altar, holds down towards him the consecrated wafer. The thing is gloriously carved, whatever it is. The assistant immediately behind the bishop, holding in his hands a candlestick, somewhat slantwise towards the altar, is, especially in the drapery, one of the most beautiful in the upper part of this tympanum; his head is a little bent, and the line made from the back of it over the heavy hair, down along the heavy-swinging robe, is very beautiful.

The next scene is the shrine of some Saint. This same bishop, I suppose, dead now, after all his building and ruling, and hard fighting possibly, with the powers that be; often to be fought with righteously in those times. Over the shrine sits the effigy of the bishop, with his hand raised to bless. On the western side are two worshippers; on the eastern, a blind and a deaf man are being healed, or waiting to be healed, by the touch of the dead bishop's robe. The deaf man is leaning forward, and the servant of the shrine holds to his ear the bishop's robe. The deaf man has a very deaf face, not very anxious though; not even showing very much hope, but faithful only. The blind one is coming up behind him with a crutch in his right hand, and led by a dog; the face was either in its first estate, very ugly and crabbed, or by the action of the weather or some such thing, has been changed so.

So the bishop being dead and miracles being wrought at his tomb, in the division above comes the translation of his remains; a long procession taking up the whole of the division, which is shorter than the others, however, being higher up towards the top

of the arch. An acolyte bearing a cross, heads the procession, then two choristers; then priests bearing relics and books; long vestments they have, and stoles crossed underneath their girdles; then comes the reliquary borne by one at each end, the two finest figures in this division, the first especially; his head raised and his body leaning forward to the weight of the reliquary, as people nearly always do walk when they carry burdens and are going slowly; which this procession certainly is doing, for some of the figures are even turning round. Three men are kneeling or bending down beneath the shrine as it passes; cripples they are, all three have beautiful faces, the one who is apparently the worst cripple of the three, (his legs and feet are horribly twisted,) has especially a wonderfully delicate face, timid and shrinking, though faithful: behind the shrine come the people, walking slowly together with reverent faces; a woman with a little child holding her hand are the last figures in this history of St. Honoré: they both have their faces turned full south, the woman has not a beautiful face, but a happy good-natured genial one.

The cornice below this division is of plain round-headed trefoils very wide, and the spandrel of each arch is pierced with a small round trefoil, very sharply cut, looking, in fact, as if it were cut with a punch: this cornice, simple though it is, I think, very beautiful, and in my photograph the broad trefoils of it throw sharp black shadows on the stone behind the worshipping figures, and square-cut altars.

In the triangular space at the top of the arch is a representation of our Lord on the cross; St. Mary and St. John standing on either side of him, and, kneeling on one knee under the sloping sides of the arch, two angels, one on each side. I very much wish I could say something more about this piece of carving than I can do, because it seems to me that the French thirteenth century sculptors failed less in their representations of the crucifixion than almost any set of artists; though it was certainly an easier thing to do in stone than on canvass, especially in such a case as this where the representation is so highly abstract; nevertheless, I wish I could say something more about it; failing which, I

will say something about my photograph of it.

I cannot see the Virgin's face at all, it is in the shade so much; St. John's I cannot see very well; I do not think it is a remarkable face, though there is sweet expression in it; our Lord's face is very grand and solemn, as fine as I remember seeing it anywhere in sculpture. The shadow of the body hanging on the cross there, falls strangely and weirdly on the stone behind — both the kneeling angels (who, by the way, are holding censers,) are beautiful. Did I say above that one of the faces of the twelve Apostles was the most beautiful in the tympanum? if I did, I retract that saying, certainly, looking on the westernmost of these two angels. I keep using the word beautiful so often that I feel half inclined to apologize for it; but I cannot help it, though it is often quite inadequate to express the loveliness of some of the figures carved here; and so it happens surely with the face of this angel. The face is not of a man, I should think; it is rather like a very fair woman's face; but fairer than any woman's face I ever saw or thought of: it is in profile and easy to be seen in the

photograph, though somewhat in the shade. I am utterly at a loss how to describe it, or to give any idea of the exquisite lines of the cheek and the rippled hair sweeping back from it, just faintly touched by the light from the south-east. I cannot say more about it. So I have gone through the carvings in the lower part of this doorway, and those of the tympanum. Now, besides these, all the arching-over of the door is filled with figures under canopies, about which I can say little, partly from want of adequate photographs, partly from ignorance of their import.

But the first of the cavettos wherein these figures are, is at any rate filled with figures of angels, some swinging censers, some bearing crowns, and other things which I cannot distinguish. Most of the niches in the next cavetto seem to hold subjects; but the square camera of the photographer clips some, many others are in shadow, in fact the niches throw heavy shadows over the faces of nearly all; and without the photograph I remember nothing but much fretted grey stone above the line of the capitals of the doorway shafts; grey stone with something carved in it, and the swallows flying in and out of it. Yet

now there are three niches I can say something about at all events. A stately figure with a king's crown on his head, and hair falling in three waves over his shoulders, a very kingly face looking straight onward; a great jewelled collar falling heavily to his elbows: his right hand holding a heavy sceptre formed of many budding flowers, and his left just touching in front the folds of his raiment that falls heavily, very heavily to the ground over his feet. Saul, King of Israel. — A bending figure with covered head, pouring, with his right hand, oil on the head of a youth, not a child plainly, but dwarfed to a young child's stature before the bending of the solemn figure with the covered head. Samuel anointing David. — A king again, with face hidden in deep shade, holding a naked sword in his right hand, and a living infant in the other; and two women before him, one with a mocking smile on her face, the other with her head turned up in passionate entreaty, grown women they are plainly, but dwarfed to the stature of young girls before the hidden face of the King. The judgment of Solomon. — An old man with drawn sword in right hand, with left hand on

a fair youth dwarfed, though no child, to the stature of a child; the old man's head is turned somewhat towards the presence of an angel behind him, who points downward to something unseen. Abraham's sacrifice of Isaac. — Noah too, working diligently that the ark may be finished before the flood comes. — Adam tilling the ground, and clothed in the skins of beasts. — There is Jacob's stolen blessing, that was yet in some sort to be a blessing though it was stolen. — There is old Jacob whose pilgrimage is just finished now, after all his doings and sufferings, all those deceits inflicted upon him, that made him remember, perforce, the lie he said and acted long ago, — old Jacob blessing the sons of Joseph. And many more which I remember not, know not, mingled too with other things which I dimly see have to do with the daily occupations of the men who lived in the dim, far-off thirteenth century.

I remember as I came out by the north door of the west front, how tremendous the porches seemed to me, which impression of greatness and solemnity, the photographs, square-cut and brown-coloured do not keep at all; still however I can recall whenever I

please the wonder I felt before that great triple porch; I remember best in this way the porch into which I first entered, namely the northernmost, probably because I saw most of it, coming in and out often by it, yet perhaps the fact that I have seen no photograph of this doorway somewhat assists this impression.

Yet I do not remember even of this anything more than the fact that the tympanum represented the life and death of some early French bishop; it seemed very interesting. I remember, too, that in the door-jambs were standing figures of bishops in two long rows, their mitred heads bowed forward solemnly, and I remember nothing further.

Concerning the southernmost porch of the west front. — The doorway of this porch also has on the centre pillar of it a statue of the Virgin standing, holding the Divine Child in her arms. Both the faces of the Virgin Mother and of her Son, are very beautiful; I like them much better than those in the south transept already spoken of; indeed I think them the grandest of all the faces of the Madonna and Child that I have seen carved by the French architects. I have

seen many, the faces of which I do not like, though the drapery is always beautiful; their faces I do not like at all events, as faces of the Virgin and Child, though as faces of other people even if not beautiful they would be interesting. The Child is, as in the transept, draped down to the feet; draped too, how exquisitely I know not how to say. His right arm and hand is stretched out across His mother's breast, His left hangs down so that His wrist as His hand is a little curved upwards, rests upon His knee; His mother holds Him slightly with her left arm, with her right she holds a fold of her robe on which His feet rest. His figure is not by any means that of an infant, for it is slim and slender, too slender for even a young boy, yet too soft, too much rounded for a youth, and the head also is too large; I suppose some people would object to this way of carving One who is supposed to be an infant; yet I have no doubt that the old sculptors were right in doing so, and to my help in this matter comes the remembrance of Ruskin's answer to what Lord Lindsay says concerning the inability of Giotto and his school to paint young children: for

he says that it might very well happen that Giotto could paint children, but yet did not choose to in this instance, (the Presentation of the Virgin,) for the sake of the much greater dignity to be obtained by using the more fully developed figure and face;[1] and surely, whatever could be said about Giotto's paintings, no one who was at all acquainted with Early French sculpture could doubt that the carvers of this figure here, *could* have carved an infant if they had thought fit so to do, men who again and again grasped eagerly common everyday things when in any way they would tell their story. To return to the statues themselves. The face of the young Christ is of the same character as His figure, such a face as Elizabeth Browning tells of, the face of One "who never sinned or smiled;" at least if the sculptor fell below his ideal somewhat, yet for all that, through that face which he failed in a little, we can see when we look, that his

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[1] In the explanatory remarks accompanying the engravings from Giotto's frescoes in the Arena Chapel, published by the Arundel Society. I regret not being able to give the reference to the passage, not having the work by me.

ideal was such an one. The Virgin's face is calm and very sweet, full of rest, — indeed the two figures are very full of rest; everything about them expresses it from the broad forehead of the Virgin, to the resting of the feet of the Child (who is almost self-balanced) in the fold of the robe that she holds gently, to the falling of the quiet lines of her robe over her feet, to the resting of its folds between them.

The square heads of the door-valves, and a flat moulding above them which runs up also into the first division of the tympanum, is covered with faintly cut diaper-work of four-leaved flowers.

Along the jambs of the doorway on the north side stand six kings, all bearded men but one, who is young apparently; I do not know who these are, but think they must be French kings; one, the farthest toward the outside of the porch, has taken his crown off, and holds it in his hand: the figures on the other side of the door-jambs are invisible in the photograph except one, the nearest to the door, young, sad, and earnest to look at — I know not who he is. Five figures outside the porch, and on the angles of the

door-jambs, are I suppose prophets, perhaps those who have prophesied of the birth of our Lord, as this door is apportioned to the Virgin.

The first division of the tympanum has six sitting figures in it; on each side of the canopy over the Virgin's head, Moses and Aaron; Moses with the tables of the law, and Aaron with great blossomed staff: with them again, two on either side, sit the four greater prophets, their heads veiled, and a scroll lying along between them, over their knees; old they look, very old, old and passionate and fierce, sitting there for so long.

The next division has in it the death and burial of the Virgin,—the twelve Apostles clustering round the deathbed of the Virgin. I wish my photograph were on a larger scale, for this indeed seems to me one of the most beautiful pieces of carving about this church, those earnest faces expressing so many things mingled with their regret that she will be no more with them; and she, the Virgin-Mother, in whom all those prophecies were fulfilled, lying so quiet there, with her hands crossed downwards, dead at last. Ah! and where will she go now? whose face will she see

always? Oh! that we might be there too! Oh! those faces so full of all tender regret, which even They must feel for Her; full of all yearning, and longing that they too might finish the long fight, that they might be with the happy dead: there is a wonder on their faces too, when they see what the mighty power of Death is. The foremost is bending down, with his left hand laid upon her breast, and he is gazing there so long, so very long; one looking there too, over his shoulder, rests his hand on him; there is one at the head, one at the foot of the bed; and he at the head is turning round his head, that he may see her face, while he holds in his hands the long vestment on which her head rests.

In my photograph the shadow is so thick that I cannot see much of the burial of the Virgin, can see scarce anything of the faces, only just the forms, of the Virgin lying quiet and still there, of the bending angels, and their great wings that shadow everything there.

So also of the third and last division filling the top of the arch. I only know that it represents the Virgin sitting glorified with

Christ, crowned by angels, and with angels all about her.

The first row in the vaulting of the porch has angels in it, holding censers and candlesticks; the next has in it the kings who sprung from Jesse, with a flowing bough twisted all among them; the third and last is hidden by a projecting moulding.

All the three porches of the west front have a fringe of cusps ending in flowers, hanging to their outermost arch, and above this a band of flower-work, consisting of a rose and three rose-leaves alternating with each other.

Concerning the central porch of the west front. — The pillar which divides the valves of the central porch carries a statue of Our Lord; his right hand raised to bless, his left hand holding the Book; along the jambs of the porch are the Apostles, but not the Apostles alone, I should think; those that are in the side that I can see have their distinctive emblems with them, some of them at least. Their faces vary very much here, as also their figures and dress; the one I like best among them is one who I think is meant for St. James the Less, with a long

club in his hands; but they are all grand faces, stern and indignant, for they have come to judgment.

For there above in the tympanum, in the midst over the head of Christ, stand three angels, and the midmost of them bears scales in his hands, wherein are the souls being weighed against the accusations of the Accuser, and on either side of him stands another angel, blowing a long trumpet, held downwards, and their long, long raiment, tight across the breast, falls down over their feet, heavy, vast, ungirt; and at the corners of this same division stand two other angels, and they also are blowing long trumpets held downwards, so that their blast goes round the world and through it; and the dead are rising between the robes of the angels with their hands many of them lifted to heaven; and above them and below them are deep bands of wrought flowers; and in the vaulting of the porch are eight bands of niches with many, many figures carved therein; and in the first row in the lowest niche Abraham stands with the saved souls in the folds of his raiment. In the next row and in the rest of the niches are angels with their hands

folded in prayer; and in the next row angels again, bearing the souls over, of which they had charge in life; and this is, I think, the most gloriously carved of all those in the vaulting. Then martyrs come bearing their palm-boughs; then priests with the chalice, each of them; and others there are which I know not of. But above the resurrection from the dead, in the tympanum, is the reward of the good, and the punishment of the bad. Peter standing there at the gate, and the long line of the blessed entering one by one; each one crowned as he enters by an angel waiting there; and above their heads a cornice takes the shape of many angels stooping down to them to crown them. But on the inferno side the devil drives before him the wicked, all naked, presses them on toward hell-mouth, that gapes for them, and above their heads the devil-cornice hangs and weighs on them. And above these the Judge showing the wounds that were made for the salvation of the world; and St. Mary and St. John kneeling on either side of Him, they who stood so once at the Crucifixion; two angels carrying cross and spear and nails; two

others kneeling, and, above, other angels, with their wings spread, and singing. Something like this is carved in the central porch at Amiens.

Once more forgive me, I pray, for the poor way in which I have done even that which I have attempted to do; and forgive me also for that which I have left undone.

And now, farewell to the church that I love, to the carved temple-mountain that rises so high above the water-meadows of the Somme, above the grey roofs of the good town. Farewell to the sweep of the arches, up from the bronze bishops lying at the west end, up to the belt of solemn windows, where, through the painted glass, the light comes solemnly. Farewell to the cavernous porches of the west front, so grey under the fading August sun, grey with the wind-storms, grey with the rain-storms, grey with the beat of many days' sun, from sunrise to sunset; showing white sometimes, too, when the sun strikes it strongly; snowy-white, sometimes, when the moon is on it, and the shadows growing blacker; but grey now, fretted into deeper grey, fretted into black by the mitres of the bishops, by the

solemn covered heads of the prophets, by the company of the risen, and the long robes of the judgment-angels, by hell-mouth and its flames gaping there, and the devils that feed it; by the saved souls and the crowning angels; by the presence of the Judge, and by the roses growing above them all for ever.

Farewell to the spire, gilt all over with gold once, and shining out there, very gloriously; dull and grey now, alas; but still it catches, through its interlacement of arches, the intensest blue of the blue summer sky; and, sometimes at night you may see the stars shining through it.

It is fair still, though the gold is gone, the spire that seems to rock, when across it, in the wild February nights, the clouds go westward.

The Bibelot

BUT *for* 'Ionica'[1] *it is quite likely that the name of William Cory would have small significance for us. Other than this it stands for* A Guide to Modern History—*practically unknown, and one or two essays buried in books by other men. Until his* Letters and Journals *were privately printed to gratify a few personal friends even the assigned facts of his uneventful life demanded correction.*[2]

To be precise in this matter of dates:

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1 (*1.*) Ionica. | London: | Smith, Elder and Co., Cornhill | 1858. *Fcap 8vo. Pp. iv+1-116.*

(*2.*) *Ionica. Part II.* (*No title page and the text not punctuated.*) *Wrapper. Pp. 48. 1877. "I sent to the Cambridge University Press this week sundry rhymes, enough to fill forty-eight pages exactly; not published, but just to 'give' away for a shilling a copy privately."* (*See* Letters and Journals, *Nov. 13, 1877, pp. 434.*)

(*3.*) *Ionica | George Allen | London and Orpington | 1891. Fcap. 8vo. Pp. viii-210. 100 large paper copies also, printed in quarto and numbered.*

2 Extracts from the Letters and Journals of William Cory, author of 'Ionica.' Selected and arranged by Francis Warre Cornish. Oxford: Printed for the Subscribers; MDCCCXCVII. *Crown 8vo. Portrait. Pp. iv+1-586.*

William Johnson, son of William Charles Johnson, was born January 9, 1823, and assumed the name of Cory in October, 1872; he died June 11, 1892. Like another poet,—the late T. E. Brown,—whose Life and Letters have so recently and for the first time made known the man behind the poet, it is to Cory's regrettably inaccessible Letters and Journals one must go if his singularly attractive personality is to reveal itself.

"Since Ionica *appeared great developments have taken place in English verse. In 1858 there was no Rossetti, no Swinburne; we may say that, as far as the general public was concerned, there was no Matthew Arnold and no William Morris. This fact has to be taken into consideration in dealing with the tender humanism of Mr. Johnson's verses. They are less coruscating and flamboyant than what we have since become accustomed to. The tone is extremely pensive, sensitive and melancholy. But where the author is at his best, he is not only, as it seems to me, very original, but singularly perfect, with the perfection of a Greek carver of gems."*

Of 'Ionica' *it would thus prove difficult to add anything worth saying after reading Mr. Edmund Gosse on this bygone little*

book.[3] *Cory apparently never dreamed of having attained lyric perfection in his rendition of Callimachus—'They told me, Heraclitus, they told me you were dead.' Here, once and forever, with incomparable pathos are eight lines of chryselephantine verse; lines that will outlast our day and generation; verse that will endure "when all this world of beauty's gone."*

"Oh! things that were! Oh! things that are!"

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3 A Note suggested by the republication of 'Ionica' *by Selwyn Image in The Century Guild Hobby Horse for October, 1891 (Vol. VI, pp. 109-112), is also worth while reading were it not so hopelessly out of reach.*

FOR MAY:

CLIFTON AND A LAD'S LOVE,
By
JOHN ADDINGTON SYMONDS.

LYRICS FROM 'IONICA'
By
WILLIAM CORY.

"THERE is perhaps no modern book of verse in which a certain melancholy phase of ancient thought is better reproduced than in *Ionica*, and this gives its slight verses their lasting charm. We have had numerous resuscitations of ancient manners and landscape in modern poetry since the days of Keats and André Chenier. Many of these have been so brilliantly successful that only pedantry would deny their value. But in *Ionica* something is given which the others have not known how to give, the murmur of antiquity, the sigh in the grass of meadows dedicated to Persephone. It seems to help us to comprehend the little rites and playful superstitions of the Greeks; to see why Myro built a tomb for the grasshopper she loved and lost; why the shining hair of Lysidice, when she was drowned, should be hung up with songs of pity and reproach in the dreadful vestibule of Aphrodite. The noisy blasphemers of the newest Paris strike the reader as Christian fanatics turned inside out; for all their vehemence they can never lose the experience of their religious birth. The same thing is true of the would-be Pagans of a milder sensuous type. The Cross prevailed at their nativity, and has thrown its shadow over their conscience. But in the midst of the throng there walks this plaintive poet of the *Ionica*, the one genuine Pagan, absolutely untouched by the traditions of the Christian past. I do not commend the fact; I merely note it as giving a strange interest to these forlorn and unpopular poems."

EDMUND GOSSE,
(*Gossip in a Library*, London, 1891.)

WILLIAM CORY.

WILLIAM CORY, or to give him the earlier name by which he is better known, William Johnson, was born about 1820 of an old Devonshire stock. From his father, formerly in the navy, he inherited a fervid patriotism, which held England to be the noblest and most generous of nursing mothers.

He was educated as a King's scholar at Eton, and went on in due course to King's College, Cambridge. At that time Kingsmen were debarred by statute from entering for the Tripos examinations. William Johnson, probably the best man of his year, was awarded the Chancellor's medal for an English poem in 1843, the Camden medal for a Latin hexameter poem and the Craven Scholarship in 1844, became Fellow of King's, and shortly afterwards went back to Eton as a master. Though pre-eminent as a scholar and composer in Greek and Latin, he was also an accurate and philosophical student in history and moral science. Indeed, he was examiner at Cambridge for the Moral Science Tripos in 1852 and 1853, and was offered, we believe privately, the professor-

ship of Modern History in 1860, on the death of Sir James Stephen.

To the general public he is best known as the author of *Ionica*, a volume of verse published in 1891. Most of the poems, however, contained in this volume, together with others omitted in publication, had already been printed in 1858 and 1877, in two slender volumes under the same title, and had for some years been fetching a considerable price at book sales. The second of these volumes is additionally curious from the fact that it contains few capital letters and no stops, spaces being substituted. Of the additional poems, the imitations of Horace had seen the light in magazines. The poems are characterised by a culture and a refinement that require, as it were, an initiation to understand. The book, being what it is, could hardly hope to appeal to a wide circle. Some selections from *Ionica* appear in Ward's *English Poets*. Still, his poetry was to him as a *πάρεργον*, as to Heine, a sacred plaything. He never dignified it into a vocation.

William Cory was the author in more recent years of a book in two volumes,

entitled *A Guide to Modern History*. The book is brilliant but eccentric. Many pages are mere strings of epigrammatic allusions; it is the kind of work that is impressive in quotations, but disappoints further reference. Besides this, he contributed an essay to a remarkable volume entitled *Essays on a Liberal Education*, which contains essays by Professor Henry Sidgwick, Professor Seeley, Archdeacon Farrar, and others; this is by far the most captivating and characteristic expression of William Johnson's genius; it deals with the education of the reasoning faculties, but for its insight, poetry, and suggestiveness might be read with pleasure by readers totally without technical interest in the subject.

He contributed a few pages — the character of Dr. Hawtrey — to Mr. Maxwell Lyte's *History of Eton College*, a passage that deserves a place in any anthology of English prose for its insight and pathos, its masterly delineation of a complex character.

But it was as a teacher and a talker that William Johnson most impressed himself on his generation; there are many among a very distinguished roll of pupils, containing

such names as Lord Rosebery, Lord Halifax, Mr. Edward Lyttelton, Mr. Alfred Lyttelton, and Mr. Julian Sturgis, who attribute the first quickening not only of intellectual life, but of serious enthusiasm, to him. Yet William Johnson can hardly be described as a successful general teacher; in the first place he was not a good disciplinarian, though, on the whole, dreaded by the boys for his powers of penetrating irony. It was with a division of from fifty to sixty boys, in a small and dingy room, that a teacher, whose every third sentence was an epigram, whose lectures, had they been delivered to a University audience, would have attracted professed students and curious listeners alike, spent deliberately and with enthusiasm the best hours of the best years of his life.

Here, standing astride on his crooked yet sturdy legs, a book held up close to his eye, he would comment, lecture, question, to the perpetual delight and encouragement of the few who were wise enough to feel what a teacher they had, and sensible enough to secure seats close to him; of what was going on in further corners of the room, as long as the boys kept their peace, he was almost

totally ignorant occasionally flinging a book, the nearest volume at hand, if a boy was either flagrantly unoccupied or suspiciously absorbed.

His short sight was almost phenomenal. The legend of his pursuing a black hen some way down Eton High-street one day when a high wind was blowing, under the impression that it was his hat, which all the time was perched securely on his head, is probably apocryphal, but certainly characteristic.

He would watch the school cricket matches through spectacles and eye-glasses (the spectacles themselves so strong that no one else could stand them), with the added aid of a binocular glass. For the games themselves, though no athlete, he was an enthusiast, connected as they are so closely with the spirit and honour of the school. "I cheer the games I cannot play," he wrote in *Ionica;* and again after a defeat in a gallantly-contested match at Lord's, in an exquisite little poem, never published, but well known to his contemporaries, he wrote —

> "I'd rather have the lads that lost,
> So they be lads like ours."

How to be patriotic without being insular,

how to be political without being local, was a constant pre-occupation. He was fond of quoting the law of Solon, which punished with confiscation of property those who in a political sedition could be proved to have taken neither side. He grasped the paradoxical principle that human nature must be educated into sympathy by antipathy, that party spirit is the only guarantee for public spirit; and it was this feeling that gave him his intense interest in an accurate knowledge of all English engagements by land and sea. Once, it is related, an old soldier found his way into William Johnson's pupil-room, which opened on to the road, and began a whining tale about the battle of Balaclava. "What regiment?" said Johnson. "The 11th Hussars." "What were you doing at 10.30 on the morning of the 25th —?" The man thought for a moment and then made a statement. "Right," said Johnson, and handed him half a sovereign. The counterpart of the story is that another tramp with a similar tale ventured on the same experiment; the same catechism ensued; the imposter faltered; he was promptly ejected, with a sharp physical reminder to tell the

truth. Again, it is told of him that he went to Plymouth to visit a friend in a man-of-war. The sailors who were rowing the gig looked with good-humoured contempt at the little landsman, wrapped in a cloak, peering through his glasses at the great hulks swinging on the tide; but their feelings rapidly gave way to respect, and respect to amazement, when it transpired that the stranger not only knew the position in which every one of the aforesaid hulks lay, but the engagements they had seen, and the names of their commanders. His pupils will not forget the face with which he would look out into the street, when the "stately music of the Guards" was going past: "Brats, the British Army!" he would say. But he was no mere Jingo sentimentalist. It was as certain that Cory would take an original view of any question as it was that ninety-nine out of a hundred people would take the commonplace view. And yet he was saved from being paradoxical by his extraordinary accuracy. Never was any one so indomitable in an argument. He had the facts at his fingers' ends, and withal all the down-rightness and the humour of his great namesake; but he had not often to use

the butt-end of the pistol, because the pistol seldom missed fire.

In 1871 he left Eton, changing his name to Cory on his accession to some small property, and lived for a while in Devonshire, at his brother's estate of Halsdon, where he also married; his wife and only son survive him. We may say in passing that his brother also changed his name on succeeding to this property, from Johnson to Furse, and is the well-known Canon of Westminster. For some years he lived in Madeira, but latterly at Hampstead, in great seclusion. His letters have all this time been treasured by his friends. In these he gave himself profusely and intently, but with delicate adaptation to his correspondent. They would form probably the best memorial of a man of whom his pupils and contemporaries say that they cannot exaggerate the greatness of his ability, his genius, and his loyalty. And yet he has hardly left a name. — *From Literary Anecdotes of the Nineteenth Century: Contributions towards a Literary History of the Period. Edited by W. Robertson Nichol, M. A., L.L. D., and Thomas J. Wise. Quarto, 2 vols., London, 1895-6.*

LYRICS FROM 'IONICA.'

DESIDERATO.

OH, lost and unforgotten friend,
Whose presence change and chance deny;
If angels turn your soft proud eye
To lines your cynic playmate penned,

Look on them, as you looked on me,
When both were young; when, as we went
Through crowds or forest ferns, you leant
On him who loved your staff to be;

And slouch your lazy length again
On cushions fit for aching brow,
(Yours always ached, you know) and now
As dainty languishing as then,

Give them but one fastidious look,
And if you see a trace of him
Who humoured you in every whim,
Seek for his heart within his book:

For though there be enough to mark
The man's divergence from the boy,
Yet shines my faith without alloy
For him who led me through that park;

And though a stranger throw aside,
  Such grains of common sentiment;
  Yet let your haughty head be bent
To take the jetsom of the tide;

Because this brackish turbid sea
  Throws toward thee things that pleased of yore,
  And though it wash thy feet no more,
Its murmurs mean: "I yearn for thee."

AFTER READING "AJAX."

THE world may like, for all I care,
The gentler voice, the cooler head,
That bows a rival to despair,
And cheaply compliments the dead;

That smiles at all that's coarse and rash,
Yet wins the trophies of the fight,
Unscathed, in honour's wreck and crash,
Heartless, but always in the right,

Thanked for good counsel by the judge
Who tramples on the bleeding brave,
Thanked too by him who will not budge
From claims thrice hallowed by the grave.

Thanked, and self-pleased: aye, let him wear
What to that noble breast was due;
And I, dear passionate Teucer, dare
Go through the homeless world with you.

MIMNERMUS IN CHURCH.

You promise heavens free from strife,
  Pure truth, and perfect change of will;
But sweet, sweet is this human life,
  So sweet, I fain would breathe it still:
Your chilly stars I can forego,
This warm kind world is all I know.

You say there is no substance here,
  One great reality above:
Back from that void I shrink in fear,
  And child-like hide myself in love:
Show me what angels feel. Till then,
I cling, a mere weak man, to men.

You bid me lift my mean desires
  From faltering lips and fitful veins
To sexless souls, ideal quires,
  Unwearied voices, wordless strains:
My mind with fonder welcome owns
One dear dead friend's remembered tones.

Forsooth the present we must give
  To that which cannot pass away;
All beauteous things for which we live
  By laws of time and space decay.
But oh, the very reason why
I clasp them, is because they die.

HERACLITUS.

Εἶπέ τις, Ἡράκλειτε, τεὸν μόρον.

THEY told me, Heraclitus, they told
me you were dead;
They brought me bitter news to hear and
bitter tears to shed.
I wept, as I remembered, how often you
and I
Had tired the sun with talking and sent
him down the sky.

And now that thou art lying, my dear
old Carian guest,
A handful of grey ashes, long long ago
at rest,
Still are thy pleasant voices, thy night-
ingales, awake,
For Death, he taketh all away, but them
he cannot take.

I will not leave the smouldering pyre:
  Enough remains to light again:
But who am I to dare desire
  A place beside the king of men.

So burnt my dear Œchalian town;
  And I an outcast gazed and groaned.
But, when my father's roof fell down,
  For all that wrong sweet love atoned.

He led me trembling to the ship,
  He seemed at least to love me then;
He soothed, he clasped me lip to lip;
  How strange, to wed the king of men.

I linger, orphan, widow, slave,
  I lived when sire and brethren died,
Oh, had I shared my mother's grave,
  Or clomb unto the hero's side.

That comrade old hath made his moan;
  The centaur cowers within his den:
And I abide to guard alone
  The ashes of the king of men.

Alone, beneath the night divine —
  Alone, another weeps elsewhere:
Her love for him is unlike mine,
  Her wail she will not let me share.

A DIRGE.

NAIAD, hid beneath the bank
By the willowy river-side,
Where Narcissus gently sank,
Where unmarried Echo died,
Unto thy serene repose
Waft the stricken Anterôs.

Where the tranquil swan is borne,
Imaged in a watery glass,
Where the sprays of fresh pink thorn
Stoop to catch the boats that pass,
Where the earliest orchis grows,
Bury thou fair Anterôs.

Glide we by, with prow and oar:
Ripple shadows off the wave,
And reflected on the shore
Haply play about the grave.
Folds of summer-light enclose
All that once was Anterôs.

On a flickering wave we gaze,
Not upon his answering eyes:
Flower and bird we scarce can praise,
Having lost his sweet replies:
Cold and mute the river flows
With our tears for Anterôs.

AN INVOCATION.

I NEVER prayed for Dryads, to haunt
the woods again;
More welcome were the presence of
hungering, thirsting men,

Whose doubts we could unravel, whose
hopes we could fulfil,
Our wisdom tracing backward, the river
to the rill,
Were such beloved forerunners one
summer day restored,
Then, then we might discover the Muse's
mystic hoard.

Oh, dear divine Comatas, I would that
thou and I
Beneath this broken sunlight this leisure
day might lie;
Where trees from distant forests, whose
names were strange to thee,
Should bend their amorous branches
within thy reach to be,
And flowers thine Hellas knew not,
which art hath made more fair,
Should shed their shining petals upon
thy fragrant hair.

Then thou shouldst calmly listen with
ever-changing looks
To songs of younger minstrels and plots
of modern books,
And wonder at the daring of poets later
born,
Whose thoughts are unto thy thoughts
as noon-tide is to morn;
And little shouldst thou grudge them
their greater strength of soul,
Thy partners in the torch-race, though
nearer to the goal.

As when ancestral portraits look gravely
from the walls
Upon the youthful baron who treads
their echoing halls;
And whilst he builds new turrets, the
thrice ennobled heir
Would gladly wake his grandsire his
home and feast to share;
So from Ægean laurels that hide thine
ancient urn
I fain would call thee hither, my sweeter
lore to learn.

Or in thy cedarn prison thou waitest for
the bee:

Ah, leave that simple honey, and take
thy food from me.
My sun is stooping westward. Entrancèd
dreamer, haste:
There 's fruitage in my garden, that I
would have thee taste.
Now lift the lid a moment: now, Dorian
shepherd, speak:
Two minds shall flow together, the
English and the Greek.

ACADEMUS.

PERHAPS there's neither tear nor smile,
When once beyond the grave.
Woe's me: but let me live meanwhile
Amongst the bright and brave;

My summers lapse away beneath
Their cool Athenian shade:
And I a string for myrtle-wreath,
A whetstone unto blade;

I cheer the games I cannot play;
As stands a crippled squire
To watch his master through the fray,
Uplifted by desire.

I roam, where little pleasures fall,
As morn to morn succeeds,
To melt, or ere the sweetness pall,
Like glittering manna-beads.

The wishes dawning in the eyes,
The softly murmured thanks;
The zeal of those that miss the prize
On clamorous river-banks,

The quenchless hope, the honest choice,
The self-reliant pride,
The music of the pleading voice
That will not be denied,

The wonder flushing in the cheek,
The questions many a score,
When I grow eloquent, and speak
Of England, and of war —

Oh, better than the world of dress
And pompous dining-out,
Better than simpering and finesse
Is all this stir and rout.

I'll borrow life, and not grow old;
And nightingales and trees
Shall keep me, though the veins be cold,
As young as Sophocles.

And when I may no longer live,
They'll say, who know the truth,
He gave whate'er he had to give
To freedom and to youth.

AMATURUS.

SOMEWHERE beneath the sun,
  These quivering heart-strings prove it,
Somewhere there must be one
  Made for this soul, to move it;
Some one that hides her sweetness
  From neighbours whom she slights,
Nor can attain completeness,
  Nor give her heart its rights;
Some one whom I could court
  With no great change of manner,
Still holding reason's fort,
  Though waving fancy's banner;
A lady, not so queenly
  As to disdain my hand,
Yet born to smile serenely
  Like those that rule the land;
Noble, but not too proud;
  With soft hair simply folded,
And bright face crescent-browed,
  And throat by Muses moulded;
And eyelids lightly falling
  On little glistening seas,
Deep-calm, when gales are brawling,
  Though stirred by every breeze;
Swift voice, like flight of dove
  Through minster-arches floating,

With sudden turns, when love
  Gets overnear to doting;
Keen lips, that shape soft sayings
  Like crystals of the snow,
With pretty half-betrayings
  Of things one may not know;
Fair hand, whose touches thrill,
  Like golden rod of wonder,
Which Hermes wields at will
  Spirit and flesh to sunder;
Light foot, to press the stirrup
  In fearlessness and glee,
Or dance, till finches chirrup,
  And stars sink to the sea.

Forth, Love, and find this maid,
  Wherever she be hidden:
Speak, Love, be not afraid,
  But plead as thou art bidden;
And say, that he who taught thee
  His yearning want and pain,
Too dearly, dearly, bought thee
  To part with thee in vain.

WAR MUSIC.

Σάλπιγξ ἀΰτῃ πάντ' ἐκεῖν' ἐπέφλεγεν.

ONE hour of my boyhood, one glimpse of the past,
One beam of the dawn ere the heavens were o'ercast:

I came to a castle by royalty's grace,
Forgot I was bashful, and feeble, and base.
For stepping to music I dreamt of a siege,
A vow to my mistress, a fight for my liege.
The first sound of trumpets that fell on mine ear
Set warriors around me and made me their peer.
Meseemed we were arming, the bold for the fair,
In joyous devotion and haughty despair:
The warders were waiting to draw bolt and bar
The maidens attiring to gaze from afar:
I thought of the sally, but not the retreat,
The cause was so glorious, the dying so sweet.

I live, I am old, I return to the ground:
Blow trumpets, and still I can dream to the sound.

MOON-SET.

SWEET moon, twice rounded in a blithe July,
Once down a wandering English stream thou leddest
My lonely boat; swans gleamed around; the sky
Throbbed overhead with meteors: now thou sheddest
Faint radiance on a cold Arvernian plain,
Where I, far severed from that youthful crew,
Far from the gay disguise thy witcheries threw
On wave and dripping oar, still own thy reign,
Travelling with thee through many a sleepless hour.
Now shrink, like my weak will: a sterner power
Empurpleth yonder hills beneath thee piled,
Hills, where Cæsarian sovereignty was won
On high basaltic levels blood-defiled,
The Druid moonlight quenched beneath the Roman sun.

A SONG.

I.

Oh, earlier shall the rosebuds blow,
In after years, those happier years;
And children weep, when we lie low,
Far fewer tears, far softer tears.

II.

Oh true shall boyish laughter ring,
Like tinkling chimes, in kinder times;
And merrier shall the maiden sing:
And I not there, and I not there.

III.

Like lightning in the summer night
Their mirth shall be, so quick and free;
And oh! the flash of their delight
I shall not see, I may not see.

IV.

In deeper dream, with wider range,
Those eyes shall shine, but not on mine:
Unmoved, unblest, by worldly change,
The dead must rest, the dead shall rest.

ON LIVERMEAD SANDS.

For waste of scheme and toil we grieve,
For snowflakes on the wave we sigh,
For writings on the sand that leave
Naught for to-morrow's passer-by.

Waste, waste; each knoweth his own worth,
And would be something ere he sink
To silence, ere he mix with earth,
And part with love, and cease to think.

Shall I then comfort thee and me,
My neighbour, preaching thus of waste?
Count yonder planet fragments; see,
The meteors into darkness haste.

Lo! myriad germs at random float,
Fall on no fostering home, and die
Back to mere elements; every mote
Was framed for life as thou, as I.

For ages over soulless eyes,
Ere man was born, the heavens in vain
Dipt clouds in dawn and sunset dyes
Unheeded, and shall we complain?

Aye, Nature plays that wanton game,
And Nature's hierophants may smile,
Contented with their lore; no blame
To rhymers if they groan meanwhile.

Since that which yearns towards minds of men,
  Which flashes down from brain to lip,
Finds but cold truth in mammoth den,
  With spores, with stars, no fellowship.

Say we that our ungarnered thought
  Drifts on the stream of all men's fate,
Our travail is a thing of naught,
  Only because mankind is great.

Borne to be wasted, even so,
  And doomed to feel, and lift no voice;
Yet not unblest, because I know
  So many other souls rejoice.

1863.

CLOVELLY BEACH.

OH, music! breathe me something old to-day,
Some fine air gliding in from far away,
Through to the soul that lies behind the clay.

This hour, if thou did'st ever speak before,
Speak in the wave that sobs upon the shore,
Speak in the rill that trickles from the moor.

Known was this sea's slow chant when I was young;
To me these rivulets sing as once they sung,
No need this hour of human throat and tongue.

The Dead who loved me heard this selfsame tide.
Oh that the Dead were listening by my side,
And I could give the fondness then denied.

Once in the parlour of my mother's sire
One sang, "And ye shall walk in silk attire."
Then my cold childhood woke to strange desire.

That was an unconfessed and idle spell,
A drop of dew that on a blossom fell;
And what it wrought I cannot surely tell.

Far off that thought and changed, like lines that stay
On withered canvas, pink and pearly grey,
When rose and violet hues have passed away.

Oh, had I dwelt with music since that night!
What life but that is life, what other flight
Escapes the plaguing doubts of wrong and right!

Oh music! once I felt the touch of thee,
Once when this soul was as the chainless sea.
Oh, could'st thou bid me even now be free!

April, 1865.

A SERVING MAN'S EPITAPH.

A SLAVE — oh yes, a slave!
But in a freeman's grave.
By thee, when work was done,
Timanthes, foster-son,
By thee whom I obeyed,
My master, I was laid.
Live long, from trouble free;
But if thou com'st to me,
Paying to age thy debt,
Thine am I, master, yet.

REMEMBER.

Οὐχ ἕρπεις παρὰ τύμβον ὀσήμεραι ὡς τὸ πάρος περ
ω φίλ', ἔγω δ' ὁ θανὼν οὐ μέμφομαι ὅττι τὺ παίσδεις·
ἀλλ' ὁπόταν παισδῃς, μέμνατό γε τοῦ πρὶν ἑταίρου,
κεἴ τι καλὸν ποθόρησθα, μονὸν λέγε, τᾶνος ἄπεστι.

You come not, as aforetime, to the headstone
every day,
And I, who died, I do not chide because, my
friend, you play;
Only, in playing, think of him who once was
kind and dear,
And, if you see a beauteous thing, just say, he
is not here.

The Bibelot

JOHN ADDINGTON SYMONDS *was born in Bristol 5 October, 1840, and when a boy of eleven years came to reside at Clifton Hill House in the suburbs where, with varying intermissions, he made his home until 1880. At that time with health gone and the prospect of only a narrow span of life remaining he finally settled at Davos in the High Alps. His death occurred at Rome, 19 April, 1893.*

That Clifton and its vicinity played a most important part in the emotional existence of Symonds no one can doubt who turns to read his autobiography.[1] Clifton and a Lad's Love[2] *may be taken to idealize the life he led there,— lonely years yet filled with home affections that kept sane the passionate longings of a heart never quite able to reach the thing sought after. When the*

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1 John Addington Symonds. A Biography Compiled from His Papers and Correspondence. By Horatio F. Brown. *Quarto. 2 vols. London, 1895.*

2 *"There is an intreval of more than thirty years between the earliest of the series, 'Clifton and a Lad's Love,' and the latest."* *See Preface to* In the Key of Blue and Other Prose Essays, *(London, 1893).*

final leave-taking of Clifton came, (in a letter to his old friend and biographer Mr. Horatio F. Brown under date of July 21, 1880,) we find what may serve as proem or epilogue, as one chooses, to this little idyl of lost years. It was taken on a note of music that once again would be heard by him, though at the last unconscious of how soon it presaged the end. His entire length of days might fitly be summed up in his own words — 'a wandering to find home.'

"Deep incommunicable spirit-speaking power of voices. I think now there is nothing like a voice for teaching me about the soul. I think there is nothing I could fall in love with but a voice. I think I love that best, and that reveals most of the life I love.

"I was sitting this evening at half-past eight, smoking under the vine at the end of my terrace, when a beautiful thing happened.

"A clear soprano voice, strong but not full, the untrained voice of a girl, I thought, of about eighteen years, from behind the wall, back to back with me, gave out a simple melody. The melody was old, probably of Italian origin, either used for hymns in the church service or caught up from some organ recital.

"She sang and paused.

"Then she sang again; but this time the same melody was repeated on the second by a contralto of extraordinary force and volume and vibration. It overwhelmed me with its richness. I tremble when I remember it. But this was no voice of woman or of man. It was a boy's voice on the point of breaking — proved by its incomparable thrill, by a something indescribable, suggestive of chords resonant within the larynx.

"They sang together, against each other, in harmony, and then at last in unison. And after I had listened breathless, the melody was (for them at any rate) played out, and I heard the noise of feet that moved upon the street, and words and low laughter.

"The yellow moon rose above the tulip trees. I shut up my pipe, and moved slowly backward; the jessamine was just in bloom, white scented stars upon thick masses of a night-like gloom of green.

"I shall never know anything concerning those two lives — the ripened womanhood of one so musically blended with the broken boyhood and just budding manhood of the other.

"You do not write to me. But it is well. I am not restless for letters. I send you this leaf from an almost leafless tree."

FOR JUNE:

DEAD LOVE, AND OTHER INEDITED PIECES,

By

ALGERNON CHARLES SWINBURNE.

If I had lived ere seer or priest unveiled
A life to come, methinks that, knowing thee,
I should have guessed thine immortality;
For Nature, giving instincts, never failed
To give the ends they point to. Never quailed
The swallow, through air-wilds, o'er tracts of sea,
To chase the summer; seeds that prisoned be
Dream of and find the daylight. Unassailed
By doubt, impelled by yearnings for the main,
The creature river-born doth there emerge;
So thou, with thoughts and longings which our earth
Can never compass in its narrow verge,
Shalt the fit region of thy spirit gain,
And death fulfil the promptings of thy birth.

WESTLAND MARSTON.

FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 16, 1866. — I am sick at heart for having to leave Clifton — this room where C. and I have sat so happily together in the mornings, with its city view; where Ch. has come to read with me — this country where C. and I have had such glorious walks — these downs where H. G. D. and I have had strange communings together, pacing up and down. I have learned, lived, enjoyed, and grown much in freedom, strength, and peace, and perhaps knowledge here. Now we must soon break up our camp. And how little I have done of any sort! What unattainable mountain-tops above me! How the aspect of Goethe, of Dante, of Parmenides, of Petrarch, the great souls with which I have lived, of wind and rain and sunlight and clouds and woods, has filled me with inextinguishable yearnings and an agony of impotency. I am too full to give forth. "Joy impregnates; sorrows bring forth."

J. A. SYMONDS.

(*From Diary quoted in Biography, Vol. I, p.* 345.)

FAR away in the valley the wind raved; and ever and anon it lashed the panes, whirling up powdery sleet, or bellowed in the chimney. All the middle space of sky had been swept bare by the hurricane. A net of vapour hid the moon, through which she cast a glaring blurred light upon the frozen scene. Beneath lay the city, as clear as in daytime. The church-towers black against the garish snow — their tops and the roof of every house piled with snow, while the dark fronts of buildings traced the course of street and quay and winding river. Far beyond, the hills stood tall and white and spectral, divided by the black lines of their hedgerows. As I gazed, they seemed in that turmoil of tempest to shiver and grow taller and then shrink again, and again to move toward me from their basements. Down there in the town a myriad of twinkling gusty lamps danced and flickered like stars upon a frosty night, except that their light was redder. Our cypresses and tulip-trees and beeches kept grinding and clanging at every wrench of the blast; and sometimes a bough, all bare and dry, was whirled across the window-panes and carried far into the darkness, to be

embedded in some distant snow-wreath. All this commotion suggested no thrill of life, no passion. The stolid, pale-faced, blear-eyed heavens and earth seemed lashed by a vindictive fury of dead impersonal force. How different was this from the same landscape last July! Then, after a sleepless night, I rose to watch the dawn between three and four o'clock. Golden light flooded the eastern hills, and came gloriously falling on my bedroom walls, as though the sun were rising for me alone. For there was an almost awful stillness, through which the messenger of day arrived. The birds who had been chirping since the darkness of the dawn, were hushed. No sound of human step or wheel or rustling tree disturbed the silence — nothing but the Cathedral clock striking a half-hour. Domed thunder-clouds, sheeted with gold around their moulded edges, went sailing ponderously eastward, and amber ripplings glimmered beneath them from the water amid those many masts of ships between the houses. These movements of the travelling clouds and sparkling river alone suggested activity, and life was barely indicated by smoke curling from three glass-

houses. There I knew that the fires had been kept awake all night by watchers, who listened to the roar of the black chimneys, crying like myself, "Would God that it were morning!"

I.

He was all beautiful: as fair
As summer in the silent trees;
As bright as sunshine on the leas;
As gentle as the evening air.

His voice was swifter than the lark;
Softer than thistle-down his cheek;
His eyes were stars that shyly break
At sundown ere the skies are dark.

I found him in a lowly place:
He sang clear songs that made me weep:
Long nights he ruled my soul in sleep:
Long days I thought upon his face.

II.

"Alone: and must it then be so?
Why do you walk alone?" she cried.
I answered with a smile, to hide
The undercurrent of my woe.

But had she known, dear friend, that thou
Art living still, she would have said:
"Oblivion should but shroud the dead;
Go, throw thy arms around him now!"

Then on my lips the smile had died:
"From deep to deeper depths I sink;
They bade me leave him on the brink,
And now hell's gulfs our paths divide."

III.

This time it is no dream that stirs
The ancient fever of my brain:
The burning pulses throb again,
The thirst I may not quench recurs.

In vain I tell my beating heart
How poor and worthless were the prize:
The stifled wish within me dies,
But leaves an unextinguished smart.

It is not for the love of God
That I have done my soul this wrong;
'Tis not to make my reason strong
Or curb the currents of my blood.

But sloth, and fear of men, and shame
Impose their limit on my bliss:

Else had I laid my lips to his,
And called him by love's dearest name.

I walked with friends to the wood of Druid Stoke. The clouds were like alabaster in the windless sky; sunlight pouring from them with mild intensity and silvery clearness. There we found snowdrops, tall, delicate, and white, among mosses and green ivy. The corymbs of the ivy on those walls of oolite are still ripe, fit to crown fervid brows of amber-skinned Dionysus. The little stream which threads that wood was swollen with rain, and went brawling between grassy banks through cresses with a pretty childish babble. On the fir-trees by the road to Sea-Mills rested very golden light; and there we found red jew's ears in the hedges. Emerging from the wood into the lowland by the Avon was like passing bodily into a mellow picture by some Dutch painter. The landscape gradually gained in breadth, and when we reached the towing-path, there were for us far-reaching intimations of the sea. Seaweed clings to bits of rock, close beneath oak-boughs and ivy roots, which go creeping downwards to tide-level, and meet

the fucus sent up from the sea to seed and grow there. Woodland and wave kiss one another strangely in the peace of those inflowing and receding brackish waters. As we travelled homewards, what wealth of gold and fire and crimson was there abroad on rocks and trees and clouds, what azure of the sky, cloven by those radiant cliffs! Dundry, far away, that long, low, undulating line of hill, stood clear with snow. Steamers splashed panting up and down, fretting a mimic sea. When at length we climbed to Durdham Down, there lay outspread before us glory beyond all glory. Eastward, a mountain range of cloud, stationary, based on blue foundations, towering through all gradations of purple valleys, of crimsoned alps, of golden lights contrasted with pink shadows on ascending ridges, up to one crowning pinnacle of purest snow. In the west rose a jagged castlewall, fringed with flame, broken with a breach through which the last rays shot ineffable radiance into calm green spaces of the sky, and smote pavilions of frail floating clouds above. All this sky-scape was cloud — cloud such as I have rarely seen, so steeped in colour,

so fantastical in shape, so majestic in proportions.

IV.

The gale is up, and far away
It comes o'er changeful sea and sand,
Where that dim distant borderland
Stands clear and doffs her mist to-day.

The broad brown woods are close to view;
Their crests are fringed with orange sky,
And here a beech all russet dry,
And here a black rock-pluming yew.

The river swirls with muddy flow;
The wild white sea-gulls screaming sail
Round point and headland on the gale,
Down to the channel's golden glow.

Far up in air the homeward rooks
Float dense against the liquid sky:
They hear the woods beneath them cry,
They mark the swelling of the brooks.

Faint heart, why sad? They flout the breeze,
They care not though their nests be torn;
They laugh the drenching showers to scorn:
Wilt thou not wing thy way like these?

V.

The chimes upon this troubled air
Went sighing, sobbing to the night.
Day drew the curtain from the light,
And left the new year bleak and bare.

A heaven impenetrably black;
Earth sullen, hard, and well defined:
No hope above; the clouds are blind,
And from the East fast whirls the wrack.

VI.

The stately ships are passing free,
Where scant light strikes along the flood;
Gaunt winter scowls o'er field and wood?
O who will bring my love to me?

White gulls fly screaming to the sea;
The bitter east wind sweeps the sky;
Faint snow streaks on the hill-sides lie:
O who will bring my love to me?

The hawthorne bough is bare and dree;
The spiky holly keeps him warm;
Brown brake shrills shivering in the storm:
O who will bring my love to me?

The bright blue sky is cold to see;
The frosty ground lies hard and bare;

So cold is hope, so hard is care:
O who will bring my love to me?

Low on the horizon, beyond Durdham Down, were streaks of white light, wavering spokes and flaring lines and streamers, flushing into faint rose-pink. Could the buried sunlight still be felt so late into a night of May? Soon, by quiverings and motions in these signs — for the west darkened, and flames burst forth among the topmost stars, and toward the east ran swords, stealthily creeping across the heavenly spaces — I knew that this was an Aurora Borealis. The pageant rapidly developed, and culminated with dramatic vividness. At the very zenith, curving downward to the Great Bear, there shone a nebulous semicircle — phosphorescent, with stars tangled in it. From this crescent of light were effused to north and west and east rays, bands, foam-flakes, belts, spears, shafts of changeful hues, now rosy red, now brightening into amethyst, now green, now pale as ashes. The whole was in slow and solemn movement, like lightning congealed, which has not ceased to throb. As glaciers are to running water, so were

these auroral flames to the quiverings of lightning. In the midst of all the glow and glory sparkled Ursa Major, calm and frosty. Other stars seemed to wander in the haze, as I have seen them in a comet's tail. The most wonderful point in the pageant was when the crescent flamed into intensely brilliant violet. Then it faded; the whole heaven for a few moments flushed with diffused rose; but the show was over. That supreme flash recalled the pulsing and rutilant coruscations with which Tintoretto spheres his celestial messengers. I could have fancied the crescent and its meteoric emanations to have been the shield of an archangel. On Monte Generoso last spring we watched a sunset of great beauty. Thunder-clouds hung over the extreme heights of Monte Rosa, stationary, like the up-spread wing of a seraph who had plunged headlong down the western steep of flame. All the rest of him was hidden by the mountain: only this one wing, fretted with grain of gold and crimson and deep blue, pointed skyward. And restlessly against the gorgeous glow behind it shot lightning flashes, as though an angelic sword behind the hills were doing

dreadfully. Well, the auroral shield was fit buckler for this seraph.

Clifton, now as ever, is full of vague yet powerful associations. When will this Circe cease to brew enchantments for my soul? The trees and streets and distant views of down and valley keep saying to me as I walk, "Put upon your heart the dress which we have woven for you; you will wear it, whether you like or not; palpitate, aspire, recalcitrate as you may, here it is waiting for you!"

VII.

I saw a vision of deep eyes
In morning sleep when dreams are true:
Wide humid eyes of hazy blue,
Like seas that kiss the horizon skies.

Then as I gazed, I felt the rain
Of soft warm curls around my cheek,
And heard a whisper low and meek:
"I love, and canst thou love again?"

A gentle youth beside me bent;
His cool moist lips to mine were pressed,
That throbbed and burned with love's unrest:
When, lo, the powers of sleep were spent;

And noiseless on the airy wings
That follow after night's dim way,
The beauteous boy was gone for aye,
A theme of vague imaginings.

Yet I can never rest again:
The flocks of morning dreams are true;
And till I find those eyes of blue
And golden curls, I walk in pain.

VIII.

Spring comes again: the blushing earth
Will deck herself with bridal flowers:
The birds among the leafy bowers
Will wake dumb winter's woods with mirth.

But I shall never find him, never:
Though winter's snow dissolve in dew,
And hyacinth's star-spangled blue
'Neath vernal breezes bend and shiver.

The field shall throb with marriage hymn,
And summer's wealth shall deck the grove,
Wherethrough my feet must lonely rove,
Disconsolately seeking him.

Seek on, seek on, till autumn dies
Like sunset in drear winter's night;

Seek on, seek on, for thy delight,
A mirage dream, before thee flies.

Brackets of grey rock jutting from the solid cliff, and shaded by the white leaves of the service-trees. From these perches the eye can plunge into the massy woods beneath. Birches fledging the precipice, feathery ashes, tall limes and glossy oaks mingle the billows of their verdant crests and fill the hollow of the valley. Sometimes a wood-pigeon, pale in sunlight, blue in shadow, passes. The sunlight streams along the ravine, casts purple shade upon the river, strikes in flame against the rich red rocks beyond. The Avon is crowded with ships and boats and steamers. These enliven the waters, ploughing up its solemn shadows and many-hued reflections. Have you noticed that reflections in a stream are more intensely coloured than real objects? The mingling reds and greens upon the river here glow like veined marble. Broken by moving prows into ribs and furrows of shivered opalescence, while the blue sky gleams back from the shadowed sides of wavelets, these many-tinted radii flank the black bulk

of sea-going vessels like fins of gorgeous sea-dragons.

Leigh Woods are as beautiful as when I roamed in them three years ago. The lights fall still as golden on those grey rocks streaked with red, on the ivy and the glossy trees, the ferns and heather and enchanter's nightshade. This loveliness sinks into my soul now as it did then. But it does not stir me so profoundly or painfully. I do not feel the unassuaged hunger of the soul so deeply.

IX.

The tide is high and stormy beams
Of sunlight scud across the down:
Above, the cloudy squadrons frown;
On their broad front a rainbow gleams.

Cease, boisterous wind. The west is grey
With glory-coated mists, that swell
From distant seas, and gathering tell
Of coming storm and darkened day.

Leave the dank clouds to droop, and guide
Toward their fair port yon sleeping sails:
Close-furled they wait the wakening gales;
Shower-sprinkled shines the pennon wide.

Sail seaward, stately ship, and view
Some blesséd isle where love is bred.
Bring me again my love that's dead,
And all I have I'll give to you.

The magic of divine spring sunlight is again abroad. The clearings in Leigh Woods are sheets of bluebells. The service-trees upon the cliffs have expanded their white under-leafage, with thick bosses of blossom honey-sweet; burly, big-bodied, furry bees, banded black and red, swaying helplessly, and swinging their unwieldy carcasses in air, hum drunken with honey-dew and white bloom above and underneath and all around.

X.

My own loved Clifton, jocund May
Hath decked thy banks and bowers again;
Thy populous elms that crowd the plain,
Thy birches, fountains of green spray.

Once more I pace the lonesome woods,
I hear the thrush and cuckoo call,
I hear the tinkling raindrops fall,
I smell the scent of hidden buds.

Star-spangled bluebell heavens are spread
'Neath silky screens of tender beech;
The yews their dewy fingers reach
To lay them on the lily bed.

All that is fair, and sweet, and gay,
All brightest germs of happy thought,
To-day their freshest gifts have brought
To crown the brows of laughing May.

But I am lone, and sad, and dull,
My brain is sick, my heart is dry;
A weary longing dims the sky,
With bitter want my soul is full.

Oh, wherefore, wherefore, is he gone?
He made my life one living spring;
My heart was then a joyous thing,
And brightened when the sunbeams shone.

I see the light, I see the flowers;
The trees are tremulous with praise;
One craving darkens all my days;
Dead love hath dulled the jocund hours.

XI.

It seems as though these years of pain
Had never made me man from boy,

So keenly do I feel the joy
That breathes in wakening spring again.

The rooks complain of coming showers;
The sharp fresh morning breezes blow;
The sunbeams on the river glow,
And kiss the brows of misty towers;

While I along our terrace stray,
I count the shadows on the lawn,
The clouds across the azure drawn
In dappled films of white and grey.

All silent signs of spring are rife:
My heart leaps up to hail the hours,
That guerdon bring of vernal flowers,
And swell our veins with love and life.

I leap, I cry, "O summer, trace
Thy hues along the deepening wood,
Thy fleecy vapours on the flood,
Thy lush green grasses o'er the chase!

"O summer, come! Voluptuous queen,
Bright mistress of a magic wand!
And stir me with thy fairy hand,
And make me what I once have been!

"For spring is fresh on mead and hill,
As fresh as those three Aprils gone;

But all my life is dead and wan,
My pulse of love is cold and still.

"I count the shadow, count the cloud,
And hail the growth of silent days;
But there were other notes of praise,
With which those springtide hours were loud.

"They sounded in the windy strife,
I heard them in the dim starlight,
They shouted through the landscape bright,
They made me one with nature's life."

We clambered down the cliffs, and bruised young fennel-shoots and marjoram and thyme and the many aromatic mints and celeries that grow there. We saw the thorns in bloom, and the light upon the hanging birches of Leigh Woods, and the jackdaws glistening from shade to sunlight as of old. Ships came up the Avon at our feet; we could almost touch the pennons waving from their masts. Then we wandered on the downs, whence we could see the channel, silvery-grey like a lake, with film behind film of Welsh hills traced upon the blue beyond. All was so calm, so clear, that the eye might trace elm-masses on the farther marge of

Severn, and the hedgerows of the upland fields, with here and there a patch of curling smoke.

XII.

The light from yonder cliff is fled,
That yester morn so brightly shone;
The glory of thy love hath gone
From my dulled life, and left it dead.

Let sunshine fade from rock and sky,
Let Leigh's deep woodland walks be torn;
O'er ruined woods I will not mourn,
Which once were green, when you and I

Went hand in hand among the flowers,
Whose names I taught you, and I made
Rare crowns of columbines to shade
With purple buds the golden showers

Of your loved curls. At times we hung
Like eagles o'er the dizzy rock,
Where faintly boomed the hammer's shock,
And ever upward slowly swung

The sailor's melancholy chant;
While ships went gliding out to sea,
Sails furled and pennons floating free,
With sunlight on their sterns aslant;

Till evening yellowed over all
From Hesper in the dewy sky—
The woods may fall, I will not sigh;
Love's star hath set, 'tis time they fall.

XIII.

Three summers gone: and now once more
Pale autumn comes to pluck the leaf;
On every hill they bind the sheaf;
The oak-woods redden as of yore.

The woods may bronze; the golden ears
May gladden all the land with grain;
But I shall never feel again
The gladness of those bygone years.

We climbed down the face of St. Vincent's Rock by a path I know. The full moon was partly hidden by heavy clouds, but the northern sky held delicate green and pale-blue light, and the moon poured oblique rays upon the river and the woods. Then the clouds sailed slowly away, and their edges were tinct with pearl and opal. Spaces of crystalline azure, seas of glass, swam between them, full-filled with moonlight and trembling with scattered stars — stars scarcely seen in that pellucid radiance—

stars palpitating, throbbing out breathless melodies. At length the moon emerged, naked and round, glorious, midway above the bridge, suspended in luminous twilight. The cliff shone like marble in her plenilunar splendour. But again the clouds gathered. A vulture's head shot forward and swallowed the moon's silver sphere. Again she triumphed, and this time the clouds dispersed in gauze and filmy veils of faintest shell-like hues. Finally, Queen Luna reigned in undisputed majesty. And now I seemed to see choruses of sylphlike shapes sailing on one side from the valley of Nightingales, and on the other from the shadow of St. Vincent's Rock, to meet and weave their dances in the air; and now an arm was thrust from the Giant's Cave, which grew and grew until the huge hand rested on my heart; and now furry paws of monsters from beneath were laid upon the knoll beside me; and now I saw the blanched face of Lilith upturned imploring from the smooth slope of the curving rock above; and then again came troops of shadows sweeping down the path which we had traversed; and yet again the gleaming scales of dragons coiled and

twisted on the glittering mud-banks of Avon, and all their massive jaws were raised to hiss.

After midnight I came home through the avenue of Clifton churchyard, and emerged upon the open space beyond. The valley of the Avon was flooded with moonlight; fleeces of almost iridescent cloud hung to westward, and the sulphurous glare of Ashton furnaces sent out flame and smoke into that liquid argent of moon-bathed wood and hill and meadow.

XIV.

How coldly steals the journeying night,
How silent sleeps the garden spray:
Far down I hear the watch-dog bay;
I hear the sheep from yonder height.

Swathed in thick mist the city lies:
Her lamps like myriad jewels peer
Through wreaths of vapour faintly clear;
Her chimes from muffled belfries rise.

Pale as the moon is memory's light,
Those April days as darkly lower,
As looms mid yonder mist the tower,
Which then with rays of morn were bright.

I hear his voice like yon thin chimes;
As those faint lamps his eyes are dim,
Deep midnight gloom encircles him,
Scarce can I dream of those dear times.

It is five o'clock in the morning. The sun has not yet touched the horizon, but the sky is yellow, barred with rose, and the morning star is shining in pale blue above. The city lies wrapped in thick white vapour; only the towers of Redclyffe and the Cathedral rising like black islands. Here and there trees and grassy knolls emerge from the level sea of mist. Our garden and the distant hills are clear in garish light of morning. The whole scene is very silent and asleep, chill with dews, the foliage stiff with frosty lack of warmth, the birds half waking. Thus, as with life itself, only the great things remain distinct to catch fading or growing lights of sunset or of sunrise, while all around is blurred and indistinct. Last evening the red blaze of the west fell upon those towers with such splendour as memory throws upon the past. This morning they stand forth like ominous events to be — sorrow and death, thick-shadowed, seen only by their certainty

of darkness. The past glows with a sunset flush of poetry. The future is cold with sad features sharply defined. But the past fades into indistinctness, while the future broadens into perfect clarity of day.

XV.

To thee far off, more far than death,
To thee I make my lonely rhyme,
Condemned to see thee not in time,
Though life and love still rule thy breath.

Our pulses beat, our hearts strike on;
They beat, but do not beat together;
Our years are young, but lusty weather
Wakes in our blood no unison.

We pace the self-same field and street,
We hear the same strong organ roll;
No music leaps from soul to soul,
Our paths are near, yet never meet.

Only in visions of the night
I seem with thee to watch the morn;
A tempest swells, and thou art borne
To lands I know not far from sight.

The Bibelot

FROM *a collector's point of view the value of this number of* The Bibelot *cannot well be gainsaid. No less than six inedited, if not wholly disowned, pieces of prose and verse by the greatest living English poet are here brought together from sources unlikely of public access. To affirm that this is an unholy labor,—a ghoulish feat of the literary resurrectionist,—is to lose sight and sense of the question at issue.*

Editorially we believe our reprint is more than justifiable; it is, in fact, from a bibliographical outlook the highest tribute to a great writer that his contemporaries can pay. Unconsidered trifles—as such things may seem to the unconsiderate trifler—they are yet compounded of an "aureate Earth"

"As, buried once, Men want dug up again."

Therefore beside the youthful work of William Morris and Dante Gabriel Rossetti these compositions find due place. One of the two specimens of early prose shows conclusively that Mr. Swinburne was already in possession of a style bound to find its logical developement in the collected

Essays and Studies of a few years later growth. The interlude extracted from a forgotten little tale — The Children of the Chapel — *proves also the mastery of that stanzaic stateliness which so speedily would burgeon forth in a golden book for all time — the Poems and Ballads of 1866.*

FOR JULY:

A MINOR POET, AND LYRICS

By

AMY LEVY.

Lowless·1862·

DEAD LOVE.
1862.

DEAD LOVE | BY | ALGERNON C. SWINBURNE. | LONDON | JOHN W. PARKER AND SON, WEST STRAND. | 1864.

Collation: — Crown octavo, pp. 15; consisting of Half-title (with blank reverse), pp. 1–2; Title-page, as above (with imprint — "London: | Savill and Edwards, Printers, Chandos Street, | Covent Garden." — in the centre of the reverse), pp. 3–4; and Text pp. 5–15. The head-line is *Dead Love* throughout, on both sides of the page. The imprint is repeated at the foot of p. 15. Issued in brick-red coloured paper wrappers, with the title-page reproduced upon the front. There is a copy in the British Museum.

A little book of great rarity, and of extreme interest. The story (in prose) had previously appeared in *Once-a-Week*, vol. vii, *October* 1862, pp. 432–434, where it was accompanied by an illustration upon wood by M. J. Lawless, here reproduced in fac-simile. The story has never been reprinted, and in all probability never will be.

THOMAS J. WISE.

(*A Bibliographical List of the Scarcer Works and Uncollected Writings of Algernon Charles Swinburne*, 1896.)

DEAD LOVE.

ABOUT the time of the great troubles in France, that fell out between the parties of Armagnac and of Burgundy, there was slain in a fight in Paris a follower of the Duke John, who was a good knight called Messire Jacques d'Aspremont. This Jacques was a very fair and strong man, hardy of his hands, and before he was slain he did many things wonderful and of great courage, and forty of the folk of the other party he slew, and many of these were great captains, of whom the chief and the worthiest was Messire Olivier de Bois-Percé; but at last he was shot in the neck with an arrow, so that between the nape and the apple the flesh was cleanly cloven in twain. And when he was dead his men drew forth his body of the fierce battle, and covered it with a fair woven cloak. Then the people of Armagnac, taking good heart because of his death, fell the more heavily upon his followers, and slew very many of them. And a certain soldier, named Amaury de Jacqueville, whom they called Courtebarbe, did best of all that party; for, crying out with a great noise, "Sus, sus!" he brought up the men after him, and threw them forward into the hot part of the

fighting, where there was a sharp clamour; and this Amaury, laughing and crying out as a man that took a great delight in such matters of war, made of himself more noise with smiting and with shouting than any ten, and they of Burgundy were astonished and beaten down. And when he was weary, and his men had got the upper hand of those of Burgundy, he left off slaying, and beheld where Messire d'Aspremont was covered up with his cloak; and he lay just across the door of Messire Olivier, whom the said Jacques had slain, who was also a cousin of Amaury's. Then said Amaury:

"Take up now the body of this dead fellow, and carry it into the house; for my cousin Madame Yolande shall have great delight to behold the face of the fellow dead by whom her husband has got his end, and it shall make the tiding sweeter to her."

So they took up this dead knight Messire Jacques, and carried him into a fair chamber lighted with broad windows, and herein sat the wife of Olivier, who was called Yolande de Craon, and she was akin far off to Pierre de Craon, who would have slain the Constable. And Amaury said to her:

"Fair and dear cousin, and my good lady, we give you for your husband slain the body of him that slew my cousin; make the best cheer that you may, and comfort yourself that he has found a good death and a good friend to do justice on his slayer; for this man was a good knight, and I that have revenged him account myself none of the worst."

And with this Amaury and his people took leave of her. Then Yolande, being left alone, began at first to weep grievously, and so much that she was heavy and weary; and afterward she looked upon the face of Jacques d'Aspremont, and held one of his hands with hers, and said:

"Ah, false thief and coward! it is great pity thou wert not hung on a gallows, who hast slain by treachery the most noble knight of the world, and to me the most loving and the faithfulest man alive, and that never did any discourtesy to any man, and was the most single and pure lover that ever a married lady had to be her knight, and never said any word to me but sweet words. Ah, false coward! there was never such a knight of thy kin."

Then, considering his face earnestly, she saw that it was a fair face enough, and by seeming the face of a good knight; and she repented of her bitter words, saying with herself:

"Certainly this one, too, was a good man and valiant," and was sorry for his death.

And she pulled out the arrow-head that was broken, and closed up the wound of his neck with ointments. And then beholding his dead open eyes, she fell into a great torrent of weeping, so that her tears fell all over his face and throat. And all the time of this bitter sorrow she thought how goodly a man this Jacques must have been in his life, who being dead had such power upon her pity. And for compassion of his great beauty she wept so exceedingly and long that she fell down upon his body in a swoon, embracing him, and so lay the space of two hours with her face against his; and being awaked she had no other desire but only to behold him again, and so all that day neither ate nor slept at all, but for the most part lay and wept. And afterward, out of her love, she caused the body of this knight to be preserved with spice, and made him a golden

coffin open at the top, and clothed him with the fairest clothes she could get, and had this coffin always by her bed in her chamber. And when this was done she sat down over against him and held his arms about her neck, weeping, and she said:

"Ah, Jacques! although alive I was not worthy, so that I never saw the beauty and goodness of your living body with my sorrowful eyes, yet now being dead, I thank God that I have this grace to behold you. Alas, Jacques! you have no sight now to discern what things are beautiful, therefore you may now love me as well as another, for with dead men there is no difference of women. But, truly, although I were the fairest of all Christian women that now is, I were in nowise worthy to love you; nevertheless, have compassion upon me that for your sake have forgotten the most noble husband of the world."

And this Yolande, that made such complaining of love to a dead man, was one of the fairest ladies of all that time, and of great reputation; and there were many good men that loved her greatly, and would fain have had some favour at her hands; of

whom she made no account, saying always, that her dead lover was better than many lovers living. Then certain people said that she was bewitched; and one of these was Amaury. And they would have taken the body to burn it, that the charm might be brought to an end; for they said that a demon had entered in and taken it in possession; which she hearing fell into extreme rage, and said that if her lover were alive, there was not so good a knight among them, that he should undertake the charge of that saying; at which speech of hers there was great laughter. And upon a night there came into her house Amaury and certain others, that were minded to see this matter for themselves. And no man kept the doors; for all her people had gone away, saving only a damsel that remained with her; and the doors stood open, as in a house where there is no man. And they stood in the doorway of her chamber, and heard her say this that ensues:—

"O most fair and perfect knight, the best that ever was in any time of battle, or in any company of ladies, and the most courteous man, have pity upon me, most sorrowful

woman and handmaid. For in your life you had some other lady to love you, and were to her a most true and good lover; but now you have none other but me only, and I am not worthy that you should so much as kiss me on my sad lips, wherein is all this lamentation. And though your own lady were the fairer and the more worthy, yet consider, for God's pity and mine, how she has forgotten the love of your body and the kindness of your espousals, and lives easily with some other man, and is wedded to him with all honour; but I have neither ease nor honour, and yet I am your true maiden and servant."

And then she embraced and kissed him many times. And Amaury was very wroth, but he refrained himself: and his friends were troubled and full of wonder. Then they beheld how she held his body between her arms, and kissed him in the neck with all her strength; and after a certain time it seemed to them that the body of Jacques moved and sat up; and she was no whit amazed, but rose up with him, embracing him. And Jacques said to her:

"I beseech you, now that you would make a covenant with me, to love me always."

And she bowed her head suddenly, and said nothing.

Then said Jacques:

"Seeing you have done so much for love of me, we twain shall never go in sunder: and for this reason has God given back to me the life of my mortal body."

And after this they had the greatest joy together, and the most perfect solace that may be imagined: and she sat and beheld him, and many times fell into a little quick laughter for her great pleasure and delight.

Then came Amaury suddenly into the chamber, and caught his sword into his hand, and said to her:

"Ah, wicked leman, now at length is come the end of thy horrible love and of thy life at once;" and smote her through the two sides with his sword, so that she fell down, and with a great sigh full unwillingly delivered up her spirit, which was no sooner fled out of her perishing body, but immediately the soul departed also out of the body of her lover, and he became as one that had been all those days dead. And the next day the people caused their two bodies to be burned openly in the place where witches were used

to be burned: and it is reported by some that an evil spirit was seen to come out of the mouth of Jacques d'Aspremont, with a most pitiful cry, like the cry of a hurt beast. By which thing all men knew that the soul of this woman, for the folly of her sinful and most strange affection, was thus evidently given over to the delusion of the evil one and the pains of condemnation.

I. STANZAS FROM QUEEN YSEULT, 1857.
II. A LETTER ON MODERN LOVE, 1862.
III. THE PILGRIMAGE OF PLEASURE, 1864.
IV. UNPUBLISHED VERSES, 1866.
V. VERSES FROM A YEAR'S LETTERS, 1877.

I.

STANZAS FROM *QUEEN YSEULT*.[1]

To the king came Tristram then,
To Moronde the evil man,
Treading softly as he can.

Spake he loftily in place:
A great light was on his face:
'Listen, king, of thy free grace.

I am Tristram, Roland's son;
By thy might my lands were won,
All my lovers were undone.

Died by thee queen Blancheflour,
Mother mine in bitter hour,
That was white as any flower.

Tho' they died not well aright,
Yet, for thou art belted knight,
King Moronde, I bid thee fight.'

A great laughter laughed they all,
Drinking wine about the hall,
Standing by the outer wall.

But the pale king leapt apace,
Caught his staff that lay in place
And smote Tristram on the face.

Tristram stood back paces two,
All his face was reddened so,
Round the deep mark of the blow.

Large and bright his king's eyes grew:
As knight Roland's sword he drew,
Fiercely like a pard he flew.

And above the staring eyes
Smote Moronde the king flatwise,
That men saw the dear blood rise.

At the second time he smote,
All the carven blade, I wot,
With the blood was blurred and hot.

At the third stroke that he gave,
Deep the carven steel he drave,
Thro' king Moronde's heart it clave.

Well I ween his wound was great
As he sank across the seat,
Slain for Blancheflour the sweet.

Then spake Tristram, praising God;
In his father's place he stood,
Wiping clean the smears of blood,

That the sword, while he did pray,
At the throne's foot he might lay;
Christ save all good knights, I say.

Then spake all men in his praise,
Speaking words of the old days,
Sweeter words than sweetest lays.

Said one 'to the dead queen's hair,
And her brows so straight and fair;
So the lips of Roland were.'

For all praised him as he stood,
That such things none other could
Than the son of kingly blood.

Round he looked with quiet eyes;
'When ye saw king Moronde rise,
None beheld me on this wise.'

At such words as he did say,
Bare an old man knelt to pray;
'Christ be with us all to-day.

This is Tristram the good lord;
Knightly hath he held his word,
Warring with his father's sword.'

Then one brought the diadem,
Clear and golden like pure flame;
And his thanks did grace to them.

Next in courteous wise he bade
That fair honour should be made
Of the dear queen that was dead.

So in her great sorrow's praise
A fair tomb he bade them raise,
For a wonder to the days.

And between its roof and floor
Wrote he two words and no more,
Wrote *Roland* and *Blancheflour*.

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1 These stanzas are from *Queen Yseult. Canto i.* "*Of the birth of Sir Tristram, and how he voyaged into Ireland*," printed in *Undergraduate Papers*, No. 1, December, 1857.

"In point of interest the *Undergraduate Papers* stand second only to *The Germ* in the list of private and semi-private magazine rarities which includes *The Snob*, *The Gownsman*, *The Gads Hill Gazette*, *The Oxford and Cambridge Magazine*, and others. In the matter of scarcity it passes them all. No more than three perfect copies can be at present located, whilst the British Museum possesses two out of the three numbers only."—WISE.

II.

A LETTER TO THE EDITOR OF *The Spectator*, JUNE 7, 1862.

MR. GEORGE MEREDITH'S "MODERN LOVE."

SIR,—I cannot resist asking the favour of admission for my protest against the article on Mr. Meredith's last volume of poems in the *Spectator* of May 24th. That I personally have for the writings, whether verse or prose of Mr. Meredith, a most sincere and deep admiration is no doubt a matter of infinitely small moment. I wish only, in default of a better, to appeal seriously on general grounds against this sort of criticism as applied to one of the leaders of English literature. To any fair attack Mr. Meredith's books of course lie as much open as another man's; indeed, standing where he does, the very eminence of his post makes him perhaps more liable than a man of less well-earned fame to the periodical slings and arrows of publicity. Against such criticism no one would have a right to appeal, whether for his own work or for another's. But the writer of the article in question blinks at stating the fact that he is

dealing with no unfledged pretender. Any work of a man who has won his spurs and fought his way to a foremost place among the men of his time, must claim at least a grave consideration and respect. It would hardly be less absurd, in remarking on a poem by Mr. Meredith, to omit all reference to his previous work, and treat the present book as if its author had never tried his hand at such writing before, than to criticise the *Légende des Siècles*, or (coming to a nearer instance) the *Idyls of the King*, without taking into account the relative position of the great English or the greater French poet. On such a tone of criticism as this any one who may chance to see or hear of it has a right to comment.

But even if the case were different, and the author were now at his starting-point, such a review of such a book is surely out of date. Praise or blame should be thoughtful, serious, careful, when applied to a work of such subtle strength, such depth of delicate power, such passionate and various beauty, as the leading poem of Mr. Meredith's volume: in some points, as it seems to me (and in this opinion I know that I have

weightier judgments than my own to back me) a poem above the aim and beyond the reach of any but its author. Mr. Meredith is one of the three or four poets now alive whose work, perfect or imperfect, is always as noble in design, as it is often faultless in result. The present critic falls foul of him for dealing with "a deep and painful subject on which he has no conviction to express." There are pulpits enough for all preachers in prose; the business of verse-writing is hardly to express convictions; and if some poetry, not without merit of its kind, has at times dealt in dogmatic morality, it is all the worse and all the weaker for that. As to subject, it is too much to expect that all schools of poetry are to be for ever subordinate to the one just now so much in request with us, whose scope of sight is bounded by the nursery walls; that all Muses are to bow down before her who babbles, with lips yet warm from their pristine pap, after the dangling delights of a child's coral; and jingles with flaccid fingers one knows not whether a jester or a baby's bells. We have not too many writers capable of duly handling a subject worth the serious interest

of men. As to execution, take almost any sonnet at random out of this series, and let any man qualified to judge for himself of metre, choice of expression, and splendid language, decide on its claims. And, after all, the test will be unfair, except as regards metrical or pictorial merit; every section of this great progressive poem being connected with the other by links of the finest and most studied workmanship. Take, for example, that noble sonnet, beginning

> "We saw the swallows gathering in the skies,"

a more perfect piece of writing no man alive has ever turned out; witness these three lines, the grandest perhaps of the book:

> "And in the largeness of the evening earth,
> Our spirit grew as we walked side by side;
> *The hour became her husband, and my bride;*"

but in transcription it must lose the colour and effect given it by its place in the series; the grave and tender beauty, which makes it at once a bridge and a resting-place between the admirable poems of passion it falls among. As specimens of pure power, and depth of imagination at once intricate and vigorous, take the two sonnets on a false

passing reunion of wife and husband; the sonnet on the rose; that other beginning:

> "I am not of those miserable males
> Who sniff at vice, and daring not to snap
> Do therefore hope for Heaven."

And, again, that earlier one:

> "All other joys of life he strove to warm."

Of the shorter poems which give character to the book I have not space to speak here; and as the critic has omitted noticing the most valuable and important (such as the "Beggar's Soliloquy," and the "Old Chartist," equal to Béranger for completeness of effect and exquisite justice of style, but noticeable for a thorough dramatic insight, which Béranger missed through his personal passions and partialities), there is no present need to go into the matter. I ask you to admit this protest simply out of justice to the book in hand, believing as I do that it expresses the deliberate unbiased opinion of a sufficient number of readers to warrant the insertion of it, and leaving to your consideration rather their claims to a fair hearing than those of the book's author

to a revised judgment. A poet of Mr. Meredith's rank can no more be profited by the advocacy of his admirers than injured by the rash or partial attack of his critics.

A. C. SWINBURNE.

III.

THE PILGRIMAGE OF PLEASURE.

AN ALLEGORY.[1]

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

PLEASURE,	GLUTTONY, THE VICE,
YOUTH,	VAIN DELIGHT,
LIFE,	SAPIENCE,
DISCRETION,	DEATH.

Pleasure. All children of men, give good heed unto me,
That am of my kind very virtue bodily,
Turn ye from following of lies and Vain Delight
That avaunteth herself there she hath but little right:
Set your hearts upon goodly things that I shall you show,
For the end of her ways is death and very woe.

Youth. Away from me, thou Sapience, thou noddy, thou green fool!
What ween ye I be as a little child in school?
Ye are as an old crone that moweth by a fire,
A bob with a chestnut is all thine heart's desire.
I am in mine habit like to Bacchus the high god,
I reck not a rush of thy rede nor of thy rod.

Life. Bethink thee, good Youth, and take Sapience to thy wife,
For but a little while hath a man delight of Life.
I am as a flame that lighteth thee one hour;
She hath fruit enow, I have but a fleeting flower.

Discretion. For pity of Youth I may weep withouten measure,
That is gone a great way as pilgrim after Pleasure,
For her (most noble queen) shall he never have in sight,
Who is bounden all about with bonds of Vain Delight.
That false fiend to follow in field he is full fain,
For love of her sweet mouth he shall bide most bitter pain.
The sweeter she singeth, the lesser is her trust,
She will him bring full low to deadly days and dust.

Gluttony. Ow, I am so full of flesh my skin goeth nigh to crack!
I would not for a pound I bore my body on my back.
I wis ye wot well what manner of man am I;
One of ye help me to a saddle by and bye.
I am waxen over-big, for I floter on my feet;
I would I had here a piece of beef, a worthy meat.
I have been a blubberling this two and forty year,
And yet for all this I live and make good cheer.

Vain Delight. I wot ye will not bite upon my snaffle, good Youth;
Ye go full smoothly now, ye amble well forsooth.

Youth. My sweet life and lady, my love and mine heart's lief,
One kiss of your fair sweet mouth it slayeth all men's grief.
One sight of your goodly eyes it bringeth all men ease.

Gluttony. Ow, I would I had a manchet or a piece of cheese!

Vain Delight. Lo, where lurketh a lurden[1] that is kinsman of mine;
Ho, Gluttony, I wis ye are drunken without wine.

Youth. We have gone by many lands, and many grievous ways,
And yet have we not found this Pleasure all these days.
Sometimes a lightening all about her have we seen,
A glittering of her garments among the fieldes green;
Sometimes the waving of her hair that is right sweet,
A lifting of her eyelids, or a shining of her feet,
Or either in sleeping or in waking have we heard
A rustling of raiment or a whispering of a word,
Or a noise of pleasant water running over a waste place,
Yet have I not beheld her, nor known her very face.

Vain Delight. What, thou very knave, and how reckonest thou of me?

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1 Lurden; a lout, lubber.

Youth. Nay, though thou be goodly, I trow thou art not she.

Vain Delight. I would that thou wert hanged in a halter by the neck,
From my face to my feet there is neither flaw nor fleck,
There is none happy man but he that sips and clips
My goodly stately body and the love upon my lips.
Great kings have worshipped me, and served me on their knees,
Yet for thy sake I wis, have I set light by these.

Youth. What pratest thou of Pleasure? I wot well it am I.

Gluttony. Ow! I would I had a marchpane or a plover in a pie!
What needeth a man look far for that is near at hand?
What needeth him ear the sea, or fish upon dry land?
For whether it be flesh, or whether it be fish,
Lo, it lurketh full lowly in a little dish.

Sapience. I charge thee, O thou Youth, thou repent thee on this tide,
For but an hour or twain, shall thy life and thou abide;
Turn thee, I say, yea turn thee, before it be the night,
Take thine heart in thine hand, and slay thy Vain Delight,
Before thy soul and body in sudden and sunder be rent.

Youth. Nay, though I be well weary, yet will I not repent,
Nor will I slay my love; lo, this is all in brief.

Vain Delight. I beseech thee now begone, thou ragged hood, thou thief!
Wherefore snuffest thou so, like one smelling of mustard?

Gluttony. Ow, methinks I could eat a goodly quaking custard.

Youth. Peace, thou paunch, I pray; thou sayest ever the same.

Vain Delight. Lo, her coats be all bemired! this is a goodly dame,
She pranceth with her chin up, as one that is full nice.

Gluttony. Ow, I would I had a pear with a pretty point of spice,
A comfit with a caudle is a comfortable meat;
A cony is the best beast of all that run on feet.
I love well buttered ale, I would I had one drop;
I pray thee, Mistress Sapience, hast thou never a sugar sop?

Sapience. Depart from me, thou sturdy swine, thou hast no part in me!

Gluttony. Ow, I wist well there was little fair fellowship in thee.
Good Mistress Discretion, ye be both lief and fair,
Of thy dish, I pray thee, some scrapings thou me spare.

Discretion. My dish, thou foolish beast, for thy mouth it is not meet;
I feed on gracious thought, and on prayer that is most sweet,
I eat of good desires, I drink good words for wine;
Thou art fed on husks of death among the snouts of swine;
My drink is clear contemplation, I feed on fasting hours,
I commune with the most high stars, and all the noble flowers,
With all the days and nights, and with love that is their queen.

Gluttony. Ow, of this communication it recks me never a bean!
Shall one drink the night for wine, and feed upon the dawn?
Yet had I rather have in hand a cantle of brawn.

Sapience. O Youth, wilt thou not turn thee, and follow that is right?

Youth. Nay, while I have my living I forsake not Vain Delight.
Till when my hairs are grey, I put her away from me.

Vain Delight. Nay, but in that day will I withdraw my face from thee.

Out, out, mother mumble, thou art both rotten and raw.

Gluttony. I will reach thee, if I may, a buffet with my paw.

Vain Delight. What, wilt thou take my kingdom? have this for all thy pains.

Gluttony. Ow, I would I had a toast to butter with thy brains.

Life. Lo, this is the last time that ever we twain shall meet,

I am lean of my body and feeble of my feet;
My goodly beauty is barren, fruit shall it never bear,
But thorns and bitter ashes that are cast upon mine hair;
My glory is all gone, and my good time overpast,
Seeing all my beauty cometh to one colour at the last,
A deadly dying colour of a faded face.
I say to thee, repent thee; thou hast but little space.

Youth. What manner of man art thou? It seems thou hast seen some strife.

Life. I am thy body's shadow, and the likeness of thy life,

The sorrowful similitude of all thy sorrow and sin;
Wherefore, I pray thee, open all thine heart and let me in,

Lest, if thou shut out good counsel, thou be thyself shut out—

Gluttony. Ow, though I be lusty I have made them low to lout,
My lungs be broken in twain with running over fast,
With beating of their bodies mine own sides have I brast;
The heaving of mine heart it is a galling grief.
Ow, what makes thee so lean and wan? *(to Life)* I trow thou lackest beef.

Vain Delight. How, what is this knave, trow?

Youth. He saith his name is Life.

Vain Delight. By the faith of my fair body I will give him grief to wife!
In his lips there is no blood, in his throat there is no breath.
Call ye this Life, by my hood? I think it be liker Death.

Life. It is thou, thou cursed witch, hast bereft me of mine ease,
That I gasp with my lips and halt upon my knees.

Death. Thou hast lived overlong without taking thought for me;
Lo, here is now an end of thy Vain Delight and thee.
Thou that wert gluttonous shalt eat the dust for bread,
Thou that wearest gold shalt wear grass above thine head;

Thou that wert full big shalt be shrunken to a span,
Thou shalt be a loathly worm that wert a lordly man.
Thou that madest thy bed of silk shalt have a bed of mould,
Thou whom furs have covered shalt be clad upon with cold,
Thou that lovedst honey, with gall shalt thou be fed,
Thou that wert alive shalt presently be dead.

Youth. O strong Death, be merciful! I quake with dread of thee.

Death. Nay, thou hast dwelt long with Life: now shalt thou sleep with me.

Gluttony. Ow, ow, for very fear my flesh doth melt and dwindle,
My sides and my shanks be leaner than a spindle;
Now foul fall his fingers that wound up the thread,
Good Master Death, do me no hurt; I wis I am but dead.
Now may I drink my sobs, and chew upon my sighs,
And feed my foolish body with the fallings of mine eyes.

Vain Delight. Mine eyes are turned to tears, my fair mouth filled with moan,
My cheeks are ashen colour, I grovel and I groan,
My love is turned to loathing, my day to a weary night,
Now I wot I am not Pleasure, I am but Vain Delight!

Youth. O Death, show pity upon me, and spare me for a space.

Death. Nay, thou hast far to go; rise up, uncover thy face.

Youth. O Death, abide for a little, but till it be the night.

Death, Nay, thy day is done; look up, there is no light.

Youth. O Death, forbear me yet till an hour be over and done.

Death. Thine hour is over and wasted; behold, there is no more sun!

Youth. Nay, Death, but I repent me.

Death. Here have thou this and hold.

Youth. O Death, thou art keen and bitter, thine hands are wonder-cold!

Death. Fare forth now without word, ye have tarried over measure.

Youth. Alas, that ever I went on Pilgrimage of Pleasure,
And wist not what she was; now am I the wearier wight.
Lo, this is the end of all, this cometh of Vain Delight!

Death. O foolish people! O ye that rejoice for a three days' breath,
Lift up your eyes unto me, lest ye perish: behold, I am Death!

When your hearts are exalted with laughter, and kindled with love as with fire,
Neither look ye before ye nor after, but feed and are filled with desire.
Lo, without trumpets I come: without ushers I follow behind:
And the voice of the strong men is dumb; and the eyes of the wise men are blind.
Your mouths were hot with meat, your lips were sweet with wine,
There was gold upon your feet, on your heads was gold most fine:
For blasts of wind and rain ye shook not neither shrunk,
Ye were clothéd with man's pain, with man's blood ye were drunk;
Little heed ye had of tears and poor men's sighs,
In your glory ye were glad, and ye glittered with your eyes.
Ye said each man in his heart, "I shall live and see good days."
Lo, as mire and clay thou art, even as mire on weary ways.
Ye said each man, "I am fair, lo, my life in me stands fast."
Turn ye, weep and rend your hair; what abideth at the last?
For behold ye are all made bare, and your glory is over and past.

Ye were covered with fatness and sleep; ye wallow'd to left and to right,
Now may ye wallow and weep: day is gone, and behold it is night!
With grief were all ye gotten, to bale were all ye born,
Ye are all as red leaves rotten, or as the beaten corn.
What will one of you say? had ye eyes and would not see?
Had ye harps and would not play? Yet shall ye play for me.
Had ye ears and would not hear? Had ye feet and would not go?
Had ye wits and would not fear? Had ye seed and would not sow?
Had ye hands and would not wring? Had ye wheels and would not spin?
Had ye lips and would not sing? was there no song found therein?
A bitter, a bitter thing there is comen upon you for sin.
Alas! your kingdom and lands! alas! your men and their might!
Alas! the strength of your hands and the days of your Vain Delight!
Alas! the words that were spoken, sweet words on a pleasant tongue!
Alas! your harps that are broken, the harps that were carven and strung!
Alas! the light in your eyes, the gold in your golden hair!

Alas! your sayings wise, and the goodly things ye ware!
Alas! your glory! alas! the sound of your names among men!
Behold, it is come to pass, ye shall sleep and arise not again.
Dust shall fall on your face, and dust shall hang on your hair;
Ye shall sleep without shifting of place, and shall be no more as ye were;
Ye shall never open your mouth; ye shall never lift up your head;
Ye shall look not to north or to south; life is done, and behold, ye are dead!
With your hand ye shall not threat; with your throat ye shall not sing.
Yea, ye that are living yet, ye shall each be a grievous thing.
Ye shall each fare under ground, ye shall lose both speech and breath;
Without sight ye shall see, without sound ye shall hear, and shall know I am Death.

EPILOGUE.

Spoken by Pleasure.

The ending of Youth and of Vain Delight
Full plainly here ye all have seen;

Wherefore I pray you day and night,
While winter is wan and summer is green,
Ye keep the end hereof in sight,
Lest in that end ye gather teen;
And all this goodly Christmas light,
Ye praise and magnify our Queen,
Whiles that your lips have breath;
And all your life-days out of measure,
Serve her with heart's and body's treasure,
And pray GOD give her praise and pleasure,
Both of her life and death.

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1 Reprinted verbatim from Chapter V. of *The Children of the Chapel.* A Tale. By the Author of *The Chorister Brothers, Mark Dennis,* etc. [Miss Gordon=Mrs. Disney Leith.] . . . London· 1864. [*Second edition,* 1875.] Pp. iv: 1–116.

It is stated by Mr. Wise that "most of the fragments of verse scattered throughout the pages of this volume were by Mr. Swinburne, particularly the lengthy poem of 38 lines commencing, '*Your mouths were hot with meat, your lips were sweet with wine.*'" If this means anything it means that *all* of the verse given in "Chapter V.— *The Pilgrimage of Pleasure,*" is by Mr. Swinburne, and as these poems "have never appeared elsewhere than in the two editions of this little book," we have given them entire.

The same authority assures us that "the other long poem" of 84 lines ("*I am mickle of might,*") "is not the work of Mr. Swinburne."

IV.

UNPUBLISHED VERSES.[1]

As the refluent sea-weed moves in the languid exuberant stream,
Stretches and swings to the slow passionate pulse of the sea,
Fair as a rose upon earth, as a rose under water in prison,
Closed up from the air and the sun, but alive, as a ghost rearisen,
Pale as the love that revives as a ghost rearisen in me.
And my heart yearns baffled and blind, moved vainly toward thee in a vision,
Thine eyes that are quiet, thine hands that are kinder, thy lips that are loving,
Comfort and cool me as dew in the dawn of a morn like a dream,
From the beautiful infinite west, from the happy memorial places
Full of the mighty repose and the lordly delight of the dead,
Where the fortunate islands are fair with the light of ineffable faces,
And the sound of a sea without wind is about them, and gods overhead,

Come back to redeem and release me from love that
recalls and represses,
Cleaves to my flesh as a flame, till the serpent have
eaten his fill.

Thy bosom is warm for my face and profound as a
manifold flower,
Thine hands are as music, thy lips as an odour that
fades in a flame,
Not a dream, not a dream is the kiss of thy mouth, or
the bountiful hour
That makes me forget what is sin, and would make
me forget were it shame.

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1 Unpublished Verses | By | Algernon Charles Swinburne | [1866. 1]

Collation: Octavo, pp. iv; consisting of Titles as above (with blank reverse), pp. i-ii; and the Text of the Verses (eighteen lines in all) pp. iii–iv.

(1) This very misleading date . . . signifies that the *Verses were written* in 1866, not that they were published in that year. They were printed and circulated in *March*, 1888.—Wise.

V.

VERSES FROM *A YEAR'S LETTERS.*[1]

I.

FAIR face, fair head, and goodly gentle brows,
Sweet beyond speech and bitter beyond measure;
A thing to make all vile things virtuous,
Fill fear with force and pain's heart's blood with pleasure;
Unto thy love my love takes flight, and flying
Between thy lips alights and falls to sighing.

II.

Breathe, and my soul spreads wing upon thy breath;
Withhold it, in thy breath's restraint I perish;
Sith life indeed is life, and death is death,
As thou shalt choose to chasten them or cherish;
As thou shalt please; for what is good in these
Except they fall and flower as thou shalt please?

III.

Day's eye, spring's forehead, pearl above pearls' price,
Hide me in thee where sweeter things are hidden,
Between the rose-roots and the roots of spice,
Where no man walks but holds his foot forbidden;
Where summer snow, in August apple-closes,
Nor frays the fruit nor ravishes the roses.

IV.

Yea, life is life, for thou hast life in sight;
And death is death, for thou and death are parted.
I love thee not for love of my delight,
But for thy praise, to make thee holy-hearted;
Praise is love's raiment, love the body of praise,
The topmost leaf and chaplet of his days.

V.

I love thee not for love's sake, nor for mine
Nor for thy soul's sake merely, nor thy beauty's;
But for that honour in me which is thine,
To make men praise me for my loving duties;
Seeing neither death nor earth nor time shall cover
The soul that lived on love of such a lover.

VI.

So shall thy praise be more than all it is,
As thou art tender and of piteous fashion.
Not that I bid thee stoop to pluck my kiss,
Too pale a fruit for thy red mouth's compassion;
But till love turn my soul's pale cheeks to red,
Let it not go down to the dusty dead.

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1 From Chapter XX of "A Year's Letters. *By Mrs. Horace Manners.* A novel in Thirty Chapters (the story being related in the form of Letters), together with a *Prologue* of Five Chapters."—Wise. Contributed to *The Tatler*, from August 25th to December 29th, 1877.

The Bibelot

"A SMALL, dark girl, of unmistakably Jewish type, with eyes that seemed too large for the delicate features, and far too sad for their youthfulness of line and contour."[1] Such was Amy Levy, poet and novelist, born November 10th, 1861, who died by her own hand in London, September 10th, 1889. What she accomplished during a brief period of eight years can almost as briefly be told.[2] One may doubtless gather from some of her books intimations of sinister significance viewed in the light of what afterward came to pass; one may also revert to inherited melancholia[3] as a

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1. *Viewed by the eye of an artist; a description verified by the photograph we reproduce. See* Preferences in Art, Life and Literature. *By Harry Quilter. 8vo. London, 1892. Pp. 135-149, (Amy Levy: a Reminiscence and a Criticism).*

2. (1) *Xantippe and other Poems. Wrappers. 1881* (2). *A Minor Poet and other Verse, 1884. Second edition, with portrait, 1891.* (3) *A London Plane Tree and other Poems, 1889.* (4) *Reuben Sachs; a Sketch, 1899. Second edition, same year.* (5) *The Romance of a Shop, 1888.* (6) *Miss Meredith, 1889. She also translated (anonymously) Péré's "Comme, quoi Napoléon n'a jamais existe."*

3. *An opinion formulated by "R. G." ("Dr.*

predisposing cause for an act which in the words of a recent poignant dedication, "opened for herself the gates of Paradise" [4] *— explanations explanatory of nothing even if they state a fact.*

Conceivably, youthful self-destruction is the result of emotional immaturity. Lives like Amy Levy and Blanche Sylvie betray lack of experience; a few more years, a stronger confidence in potential possibilities, and they had remained with us, not away from us! Here was a brilliant young creature whose bourgeoise environment, (again conceivably,) bored her beyond expression. At such crises neither feminine friendship or the sweetest domesticities suffice. The emotions demanding an outlet find none. Literally true is the old-world cry of Catarina's: "I am dying for a little love,"—a pathetic negation summing itself up in the greatest of tragic finales—whereof "the rest is silence."

After all what matter? Poets depart: poetry does not depart. By her lyrics Amy Levy will be remembered when much

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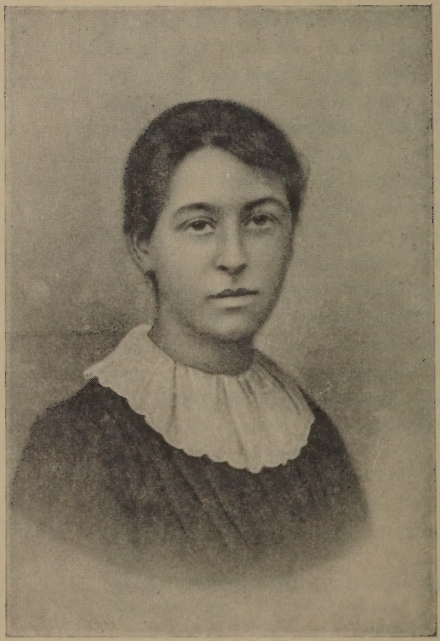
Richard Garnett) in The Dictionary of National Biography, *from "personal knowledge."*

4. See an interesting article by Florence A. H. Morgan on "The Rubáiyát in French" *in* The Critic *for April.*



else of current rhyme "is lost in the dust of its own buried days." In the Mile End Road *is a flawless little jewel: for the moment it lifts and leaves us at the level of greater singers, even as the Heraclitus lines of William Cory lift and leave him on still higher levels of marmoreal verse.*

FOR AUGUST:

A PAINTER OF THE LAST CENTURY,
By
JOHN ADDINGTON SYMONDS.

A MINOR POET AND LYRICS
By
AMY LEVY.

Sleep there beneath the lilies,
Rest there beneath the grass,
Nor know what good nor ill is
Whatever come to pass;—
O lovely Amaryllis
That wast so fair, alas!

Now nothing more thou fearest
Beneath the silent sod.
No burden now thou bearest
As when thy feet here trod;—
Would I were with thee, dearest,
With thee, and thou with God.

CHARLES SAYLE.

"BEFORE the great mysteries of life her soul grew frozen and appalled.

"It seemed to her, as she sat there in the fading light, that this is the bitter lesson of existence: that the sacred serves only to teach the full meaning of sacrilege; the beautiful of the hideous; modesty of outrage; joy of sorrow; life of death."

(REUBEN SACHS: *A sketch.*)

"I have had enough of wisdom, and enough of mirth,
For the way's one, and the end's one, and it's soon to the end of the earth;
And it's then good-night and to bed, and if heels or heart ache,
Well, it's a sound sleep and long sleep, and sleep too deep to wake."

ARTHUR SYMONS.

BROKEN MUSIC.

A note
All out of tune in this world's instrument.

AMY LEVY.

I KNOW *not in what fashion she was made,*
Nor what her voice was, when she used to speak,
Nor if the silken lashes threw a shade
On wan or rosy cheek.

I picture her with sorrowful vague eyes
Illumed with such strange gleams of inner light
As linger in the drift of London skies
Ere twilight turns to night.

I know not; I conjecture. 'Twas a girl
That with her own most gentle desperate hand
From out God's mystic setting plucked life's pearl—
'Tis hard to understand.

So precious life is! Even to the old
The hours are as a miser's coins, and she—
Within her hands lay youth's unminted gold
And all felicity.

The winged impetuous spirit, the white flame
That was her soul once, whither has it flown?
Above her brow gray lichens blot her name
Upon the carven stone.

This is her Book of Verses — wren-like notes,
Shy franknesses, blind gropings, haunting fears;
At times across the chords abruptly floats
A mist of passionate tears.

A fragile lyre too tensely keyed and strung,
A broken music, weirdly incomplete:
Here a proud mind, self-baffled and self-stung,
Lies coiled in dark defeat.

THOMAS BAILEY ALDRICH.

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"What should such fellows as I do,
Crawling between earth and heaven?"

HERE is the phial; here I turn the key
Sharp in the lock. Click!—there's no doubt it turned.
This is the third time; there is luck in threes—
Queen Luck, that rules the world, befriend me now
And freely I'll forgive you many wrongs!
Just as the draught began to work, first time,
Tom Leigh, my friend (as friends go in the world),
Burst in, and drew the phial from my hand,
(Ah Tom! ah, Tom! that was a sorry turn!)
And lectured me a lecture, all compact
Of neatest, newest phrases, freshly culled
From works of newest culture: "common good;"
"The world's great harmonies;" "must be content
With knowing God works all things for the best,
And Nature never stumbles." Then again,
"The common good," and still, "the common good;"
And what a small thing was our joy or grief
When weigh'd with that of thousands. Gentle Tom,
But you might wag your philosophic tongue
From morn till eve, and still the thing's the same:
I am myself, as each man is himself—
Feels his own pain, joys his own joy, and loves
With his own love, no other's. Friend, the world

Is but one man; one man is but the world.
And I am I, and you are Tom, that bleeds
When needles prick your flesh (mark, yours, not mine).
I must confess it; I can feel the pulse
A-beating at my heart, yet never knew
The throb of cosmic pulses. I lament
The death of youth's ideal in my heart;
And, to be honest, never yet rejoiced
In the world's progress — scarce, indeed, discerned;
(For still it seems that God's a Sisyphus
With the world for stone).
You shake your head. I'm base,
Ignoble? Who is noble — you or I?
I was not once thus? Ah, my friend, we are
As the Fates make us.
This time is the third;
The second time the flask fell from my hand,
Its drowsy juices spilt upon the board;
And there my face fell flat, and all the life
Crept from my limbs, and hand and foot were bound
With mighty chains, subtle, intangible;
While still the mind held to its wonted use,
Or rather grew intense and keen with dread,
An awful dread — I thought I was in Hell.
In Hell, in Hell! Was ever Hell conceived
By mortal brain, by brain Divine devised,
Darker, more fraught with torment, than the world
For such as I? A creature maimed and marr'd

From very birth. A blot, a blur, a note
All out of tune in this world's instrument.
A base thing, yet not knowing to fulfil
Base functions. A high thing, yet all unmeet
For work that's high. A dweller on the earth,
Yet not content to dig with other men
Because of certain sudden sights and sounds
(Bars of broke music; furtive, fleeting glimpse
Of angel faces 'thwart the grating seen)
Perceived in Heaven. Yet when I approach
To catch the sound's completeness, to absorb
The faces' full perfection, Heaven's gate,
Which then had stood ajar, sudden falls to,
And I, a-shiver in the dark and cold,
Scarce hear afar the mocking tones of men:
"He would not dig, forsooth; but he must strive
For higher fruits than what our tillage yields;
Behold what comes, my brothers, of vain pride!"
Why play with figures? trifle prettily
With this my grief which very simply 's said,
"There is no place for me in all the world"?
The world's a rock, and I will beat no more
A breast of flesh and blood against a rock. . . .
A stride across the planks for old time's sake.
Ah, bare, small room that I have sorrowed in;
Ay, and on sunny days, haply, rejoiced;
We know some things together, you and I!
Hold there, you rangèd row of books! In vain

You beckon from your shelf. You've stood my friends
Where all things else were foes; yet now I'll turn
My back upon you, even as the world
Turns it on me. And yet — farewell, farewell!
You, lofty Shakespere, with the tattered leaves
And fathomless great heart, your binding 's bruised
Yet did I love you less? Goethe, farewell;
Farewell, triumphant smile and tragic eyes,
And pitiless world-wisdom!
For all men
These two. And 'tis farewell with you, my friends,
More dear because more near: Theokritus;
Heine that stings and smiles; Prometheus' bard;
(I've grown too coarse for Shelley latterly:)
And one wild singer of to-day, whose song
Is all aflame with passionate bard's blood
Lash'd into foam by pain and the world's wrong.
At least, he has a voice to cry his pain;
For him, no silent writhing in the dark,
No muttering of mute lips, no straining out
Of a weak throat a-choke with pent-up sound,
A-throb with pent-up passion. . . .
Ah, my son!
That's you, then, at the window, looking in
To beam farewell on one who 's loved you long
And very truly. Up, you creaking thing,
You squinting, cobwebbed casement!
So, at last,

I can drink in the sunlight. How it falls
Across that endless sea of London roofs,
Weaving such golden wonders on the grey,
That almost, for the moment, we forget
The world of woe beneath them.
Underneath,
For all the sunset glory, Pain is king.
Yet, the sun's there, and very sweet withal;
And I'll not grumble that it's only sun,
But open wide my lips — thus — drink it in;
Turn up my face to the sweet evening sky
(What royal wealth of scarlet on the blue
So tender toned, you'd almost think it green)
And stretch my hands out — so — to grasp it tight.
Ha, ha! 'tis sweet awhile to cheat the Fates,
And be as happy as another man.
The sun works in my veins like wine, like wine!
'Tis a fair world: if dark, indeed, with woe,
Yet having hope and hint of such a joy,
That a man, winning, well might turn aside,
Careless of Heaven . . .
O enough; I turn
From the sun's light, or haply I shall hope.
I have hoped enough; I would not hope again:
'Tis hope that is most cruel.
Tom, my friend,
You very sorry philosophic fool;
'Tis you, I think, that bid me be resign'd,

Trust, and be thankful.

Out on you! Resign'd?

I'm not resign'd, not patient, not school'd in
To take my starveling's portion and pretend
I'm grateful for it. I want all, all, all;
I've appetite for all. I want the best:
Love, beauty, sunlight, nameless joy of life.
There's too much patience in the world, I think.
We have grown base with crooking of the knee.
Mankind — say — God has bidden to a feast;
The board is spread, and groans with cates and drinks;
In troop the guests; each man with appetite
Keen-whetted with expectance.

In they troop,

Struggle for seats, jostle and push and seize.
What's this? what's this? There are not seats for all!
Some men must stand without the gates; and some
Must linger by the table, ill-supplied
With broken meats. One man gets meat for two,
The while another hungers. If I stand
Without the portals, seeing others eat
Where I had thought to satiate the pangs
Of mine own hunger; shall I then come forth
When all is done, and drink my Lord's good health
In my Lord's water? Shall I not rather turn
And curse him, curse him for a niggard host?
O, I have hungered, hungered, through the years,
Till appetite grows craving, then disease;

I am starved, wither'd, shrivelled.
Peace, O peace!
This rage is idle; what avails to curse
The nameless forces, the vast silences
That work in all things.
This time is the third,
I wrought before in heat, stung mad with pain,
Blind, scarcely understanding; now I know
What thing I do.
There was a woman once;
Deep eyes she had, white hands, a subtle smile,
Soft speaking tones: she did not break my heart,
Yet haply had her heart been otherwise
Mine had not now been broken. Yet, who knows?
My life was jarring discord from the first:
Tho' here and there brief hints of melody,
Of melody unutterable, clove the air.
From this bleak world, into the heart of night,
The dim, deep bosom of the universe,
I cast myself. I only crave for rest;
Too heavy is the load. I fling it down.

EPILOGUE.

We knocked and knocked; at last, burst in the door,
And found him as you know — the outstretched arms
Propping the hidden face. The sun had set,
And all the place was dim with lurking shade.
There was no written word to say farewell,

Or make more clear the deed.
I search'd and search'd;
The room held little: just a row of books
Much scrawl'd and noted; sketches on the wall,
Done rough in charcoal; the old instrument
(A violin, no Stradivarius)
He played so ill on; in the table drawer
Large schemes of undone work. Poems half-writ;
Wild drafts of symphonies; big plans of fugues;
Some scraps of writing in a woman's hand:
No more—the scattered pages of a tale,
A sorry tale that no man cared to read.
Alas, my friend, I lov'd him well, tho' he
Held me a cold and stagnant-blooded fool,
Because I am content to watch, and wait
With a calm mind the issue of all things.
Certain it is my blood's no turbid stream;
Yet, for all that, haply I understood
More than he ever deem'd; nor held so light
The poet in him. Nay, I sometimes doubt
If they have not, indeed, the better part—
These poets, who get drunk with sun, and weep
Because the night or a woman's face is fair.
Meantime there is much talk about my friend.
The women say, of course, he died for love;
The men, for lack of gold, or cavilling
Of carping critics. I, Tom Leigh, his friend
I have no word at all to say of this.

Nay, I had deem'd him more philosopher;
For did he think by this one paltry deed
To cut the knot of circumstance, and snap
The chain which binds all being?

TO A DEAD POET.

I KNEW not if to laugh or weep;
They sat and talked of you—
"'Twas here he sat; 'twas this he said!
'Twas that he used to do.

"Here is the book wherein he read,
The room wherein he dwelt;
And he" (they said) "was such a man,
Such things he thought and felt."

I sat and sat, I did not stir;
They talked and talked away.
I was as mute as any stone,
I had no word to say.

They talked and talked; like to a stone
My heart grew in my breast—
I, who had never seen your face
Perhaps I knew you best.

SINFONIA EROICA.

(TO SYLVIA.)

My Love, my Love, it was a day in June,
A mellow, drowsy, golden afternoon;
And all the eager people thronging came
To that great hall, drawn by the magic name
Of one, a high magician, who can raise
The spirits of the past and future days,
And draw the dreams from out the secret breast,
Giving them life and shape.
I, with the rest,
Sat there athirst, atremble for the sound;
And as my aimless glances wandered round,
Far off, across the hush'd, expectant throng,
I saw your face that fac'd mine.
Clear and strong
Rush'd forth the sound, a mighty mountain stream;
Across the clust'ring heads mine eyes did seem
By subtle forces drawn, your eyes to meet.
Then you, the melody, the summer heat,
Mingled in all my blood and made it wine.
Straight I forgot the world's great woe and mine;
My spirit's murky lead grew molten fire;
Despair itself was rapture.
Ever higher,
Stronger and clearer rose the mighty strain;
Then sudden fell; then all was still again,

And I sank back, quivering as one in pain.
Brief was the pause; then, 'mid a hush profound,
Slow on the waiting air swell'd forth a sound
So wondrous sweet that each man held his breath;
A measur'd, mystic melody of death.
Then back you lean'd your head, and I could note
The upward outline of your perfect throat;
And ever, as the music smote the air,
Mine eyes from far held fast your body fair.
And in that wondrous moment seem'd to fade
My life's great woe, and grow an empty shade
Which had not been, nor was not.
And I knew
Not which was sound, and which, O Love, was you.

TO SYLVIA.

"O LOVE, lean thou thy cheek to mine,
And let the tears together flow"—
Such was the song you sang to me
Once, long ago.

Such was the song you sang; and yet
(O be not wroth!) I scarcely knew
What sounds flow'd forth; I only felt
That you were you.

I scarcely knew your hair was gold,
Nor of the heavens' own blue your eyes.
Sylvia and song, divinely mixt,
Made Paradise.

These things I scarcely knew; to-day,
When love is lost and hope is fled,
The song you sang so long ago
Rings in my head.

Clear comes each note and true; to-day,
As in a picture I behold
Your turn'd-up chin, and small, sweet head
Misty with gold.

I see how your dear eyes grew deep,
How your lithe body thrilled and swayed,
And how were whiter than the keys
Your hands that played. . . .

Ah, sweetest! cruel have you been,
And robbed my life of many things.
I will not chide; ere this I knew
That Love had wings.

You've robbed my life of many things —
Of love and hope, of fame and pow'r.
So be it, sweet. You cannot steal
One golden hour.

A FAREWELL.

(AFTER HEINE.)

THE sad rain falls from Heaven,
A sad bird pipes and sings;
I am sitting here at my window
And watching the spires of "King's."

O fairest of all fair places,
Sweetest of all sweet towns!
With the birds, and the greyness and greenness,
And the men in caps and gowns.

All they that dwell within thee,
To leave are ever loth,
For one man gets friends, and another
Gets honour, and one gets both.

The sad rain falls from Heaven;
My heart is great with woe—
I have neither a friend nor honour,
Yet I am sorry to go.

EPITAPH.

(ON A COMMONPLACE PERSON WHO DIED IN BED.)

THIS is the end of him, here he lies:
The dust in his throat, the worm in his eyes,
The mould in his mouth, the turf on his breast;
This is the end of him, this is best.
He will never lie on his couch awake,
Wide-eyed, tearless, till dim daybreak.
Never again will he smile and smile
When his heart is breaking all the while.
He will never stretch out his hands in vain
Groping and groping — never again.
Never ask for bread, get a stone instead,
Never pretend that the stone is bread.
Never sway and sway 'twixt the false and true,
Weighing and noting the long hours through.
Never ache and ache with the chok'd-up sighs;
This is the end of him, here he lies.

LONDON POETS.

(IN MEMORIAM.)

THEY trod the streets and squares where now I tread,
With weary hearts, a little while ago;
When, thin and grey, the melancholy snow
Clung to the leafless branches overhead;
Or when the smoke-veiled sky grew stormy-red
In autumn; with a re-arisen woe
Wrestled, what time the passionate spring winds blow;
And paced scorched stones in summer:—they are dead.

The sorrow of their souls to them did seem
As real as mine to me, as permanent.
To-day, it is the shadow of a dream,
The half-forgotten breath of breezes spent.
So shall another soothe his woe supreme—
"No more he comes, who this way came and went."

THE BIRCH-TREE AT LOSCHWITZ.

At Loschwitz above the city
The air is sunny and chill;
The birch-trees and the pine-trees
Grow thick upon the hill.

Lone and tall, with silver stem,
A birch-tree stands apart;
The passionate wind of spring-time
Stirs in its leafy heart.

I lean against the birch-tree,
My arms around it twine;
It pulses, and leaps, and quivers,
Like a human heart to mine.

One moment I stand, then sudden
Let loose mine arms that cling:
O God! the lonely hillside,
The passionate wind of spring!

LAST WORDS.

Dead! all's done with!
R. BROWNING.

THESE blossoms that I bring,
This song that here I sing,
These tears that now I shed,
I give unto the dead.

There is no more to be done,
Nothing beneath the sun,
All the long ages through,
Nothing — by me for you.

The tale is told to the end;
This, ev'n, I may not know —
If we were friend and friend,
If we were foe and foe.

All's done with utterly,
All's done with. Death to me
Was ever Death indeed;
To me no kindly creed

Consolatory was given.
You were of earth, not Heaven. . . .
This dreary day, things seem
Vain shadows in a dream,

Or some strange, pictured show;
And mine own tears that flow,
My hidden tears that fall,
The vainest of them all.

A REMINISCENCE.

It is so long gone by, and yet
  How clearly now I see it all!
The glimmer of your cigarette,
  The little chamber, narrow and tall.

Perseus; your picture in its frame;
  (How near they seem and yet how far!)
The blaze of kindled logs; the flame
  Of tulips in a mighty jar.

Florence and spring-time: surely each
  Glad things unto the spirit saith.
Why did you lead me in your speech
  To these dark mysteries of death?

THE SEQUEL TO "A REMINISCENCE."

Not in the street and not in the square,
The street and square where you went and came;
With shuttered casement your house stands bare,
Men hush their voice when they speak your name.

I, too, can play at the vain pretence,
Can feign you dead; while a voice sounds clear
In the inmost depths of my heart: Go hence,
Go, find your friend who is far from here.

Not here, but somewhere where I can reach!
Can a man with motion, hearing and sight,
And a thought that answered my thought and speech,
Be utterly lost and vanished quite?

Whose hand was warm in my hand last week? . . .
My heart beat fast as I neared the gate—
Was it this I had come to seek,
"A stone that stared with your name and date;"

A hideous, turfless, fresh-made mound;
A silence more cold than the wind that blew?
What had I lost, and what had I found?
My flowers that mocked me fell to the ground—
Then, and then only, my spirit knew.

IN THE MILE END ROAD.

How like her! But 'tis she herself,
  Comes up the crowded street,
How little did I think, the morn,
  My only love to meet!

Whose else that motion and that mien?
  Whose else that airy tread?
For one strange moment I forgot
  My only love was dead.

THE PROMISE OF SLEEP.

Put the sweet thoughts from out thy mind,
The dreams from out thy breast;
No joy for thee — but thou shalt find
Thy rest.

All day I could not work for woe,
I could not work nor rest;
The trouble drove me to and fro,
Like a leaf on the storm's breast.

Night came and saw my sorrow cease;
Sleep in the chamber stole;
Peace crept about my limbs, and peace
Fell on my stormy soul.

And now I think of only this, —
How I again may woo
The gentle sleep — who promises
That death is gentle too.

TO VERNON LEE.

On Bellosguardo, when the year was young,
We wandered, seeking for the daffodil
And dark anemone, whose purples fill
The peasant's plot, between the corn-shoots sprung.

Over the grey, low wall the olive flung
Her deeper greyness; far off, hill on hill
Sloped to the sky, which, pearly-pale and still,
Above the large and luminous landscape hung.

A snowy blackthorn flowered beyond my reach;
You broke a branch and gave it to me there;
I found for you a scarlet blossom rare.

Thereby ran on of Art and Life our speech;
And of the gifts the gods have given to each —
Hope unto you, and unto me Despair.

The Bibelot

WE do not know if an attempt will ever be made to give admirers of John Addington Symonds a complete edition of his essays.[1] *Widely scattered in various magazines over a period of thirty years it is doubtful if all or even the larger part could be brought together; a dispersion their author may have been content to abide, resting secure on triumphs in wider fields already won.*

Among what he perhaps considered as minor studies the article on Pietro Longhi assuredly stands alone.[2] *It belongs to an epoch in Symonds' literary life which saw produced in rapid succession The Life of Benvenuto Cellini, The Memoirs of Carlo Gozzi, and, a little later but with the same inimitable verve his crowning work — The Life of Michelangelo Buonarroti: work of superb achievement not easily set aside by any later man of letters.*

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1 *A bibliography is still a disideratum. The short list given by Mr. Brown* (John Addington Symonds: A Biography, *Vol. II, pp. 387-390*) *is not complete.*

2 *See* The Century Guild Hobby Horse, *Vol IV, pp. 42-55* (*London, 1889*).

For those who recall A Maker of Forgotten Tunes *there will be found in this Venetian Painter of the Last Century a resetting of a similar old world scene. Its colours are possibly less subdued and sombre but the subtle suggestion of 'dear dead women' remains with us. It is indeed a world only existing in faded aquatint, and yet how real it once* was! *Forgotten days of gold and crimson sunsets that flared and faded long ago: lost years no living light again illumes.*

FOR SEPTEMBER:

PROVERBS IN PORCELAIN

By

AUSTIN DOBSON.

A VENETIAN PAINTER OF THE LAST CENTURY

By

JOHN ADDINGTON SYMONDS.

A VENETIAN PAINTER OF THE LAST CENTURY, PIETRO LONGHI.

I.

THE eighteenth century was marked in Venice by a partial revival of the art of painting. Four contemporary masters — Tiepolo, Canaletti, Longhi and Guardi — have left abundance of meritorious work, which illustrates the taste and manners of society, shows how men and women dressed and moved and took their pastime in the City of the Waters, and preserves for us the external features of Venice during the last hundred years of the Republic.[1]

As an artist, Tiepolo was undoubtedly the strongest of these four. In him alone we recognize a genius of the first order, who, had he been born in the great age of Italian painting, might have disputed the palm with men like Tintoretto. His frescoes in the Palazzo Labia, representing the embarkation of Antony and Cleopatra on the Cydnus, and their famous banquet at Canopus, are worthy to be classed with the finest decorative work of Paolo Veronese. Indeed, the sense of colour, the robust breadth of design, and the firm, unerring execution, which dis-

tinguish that great master, seem to have passed into Tiepolo, who revives the splendours of the sixteenth century in these superbly painted pageants. It is to be regretted, that one so eminently gifted should have condescended to the barocco taste of the age in those many allegories and celestial triumphs, which he executed upon the ceilings of palaces and the cupolas of churches. Little, except the frescoes of the Labia reception-hall, survives to show what Tiepolo might have achieved, had he remained true to his native instinct for heroic subjects and for masculine sobriety of workmanship.

Of Canaletti it is not necessary to say much. The fame which he erewhile enjoyed in England has been obscured of late years — to some extent, perhaps, by the eloquence of Mr. Ruskin, but more by the finer sense for landscape and the truer way of rendering nature which have sprung up in Europe. His pictures of Venetian buildings and canals strike us as cold, tame, and mechanical, accustomed as we are to the magic of Turner's palette and the penetrative force of his imagination.

Guardi, the pupil and in some respects the imitator of Canaletti, has met with a different fate. Less prized during the heyday of his master's fame, he has been steadily acquiring reputation on account of certain qualities peculiar to himself. His draughtsmanship displays an agreeable sketchiness; his colouring a graceful gemmy brightness and a glow of sunny gold. But what has mainly served to win for Guardi popularity, is the attention he paid to contemporary costume and manners. Canaletti filled large canvasses with mathematical perspectives of city and water. At the same time he omitted life and incident. There is little to remind us that the Venice he so laboriously depicted was the Venice of perukes and bag-wigs, of masks and hoops and carnival disguises. Guardi had an eye for local colour and for fashionable humours. The result is that some of his small pictures — one, for instance, which represents a brilliant reception in the Sala del Collegio of the Ducal Palace — have a real value for us by recalling the life of a vanished and irrecoverable past. Thus Guardi illustrates the truth, that artists may acquire posthumous impor-

tance by felicitous accident in their choice of subjects or the bias of their sympathies. We would willingly exchange a dozen so-called historical pictures for one fresh and vivid scene, which brings a bygone phase of civilization before our eyes.

In this particular respect Longhi surpasses Guardi, and deserves to be styled the pictorial chronicler of Venetian society in the eighteenth century. He has even been called the Venetian Hogarth and the Venetian Boucher. Neither of these titles, however, as I shall attempt to demonstrate, rightly characterize his specific quality. Could his numerous works be collected in one place, or adequately reproduced, we should possess a complete epitome of Venetian life and manners in the age which produced Goldoni and Casanova, Carlo Gozzi and Caterina Dolfin-Tron.

II.

VERY little is known of Longhi's career, and that little has no great importance. He was the son of a goldsmith, born at Venice in 1702, and brought up to his father's trade. While yet a lad, Pietro

showed unusual powers of invention and elegance of drawing in the designs he made for ornamental plate. This induced his parents to let him study painting. His early training in the goldsmith's trade, however, seems to have left an indelible mark on Longhi's genius. A love of delicate line remained with him, and he displayed an affectionate partiality for the minutest details of decorative furniture, dress, and articles of luxury. Some of his drawings of plate—coffee-pots, chocolate-mills, ewers, salvers, water-vessels—are exquisite for their instinctive sense of graceful curve and unerring precision of contour. It was a period, as we know, during which such things acquired an almost flawless purity of outline, and Longhi felt them with the enthusiasm of a practised artizan.

He studied painting under Antonio Balestra at Venice, and also under Giuseppe Maria Crespi at Bologna. The baneful influences of the latter city may be traced in Longhi's earliest known undertaking. This is an elaborate work in Fresco at the Sagredo Palace on the Grand Canal. The patrician family of that name inhabited an old

Venetian-Gothic house at San Felice. Early in the last century they rebuilt the hall and staircase in Palladian style, leaving the front with its beautiful arcades untouched. The decoration of this addition to their mansion was entrusted to Pietro Longhi in 1734. The subject, chosen by himself or indicated by his patron, was the Fall of the Giants—*La Caduta dei Giganti*. Longhi treated this unmanageable theme as follows. He placed the deities of Olympus upon the ceiling. Jupiter in the centre advances, brandishing his arms, and hurling forked lightnings on the Titans, who are precipitated headlong among solid purple clouds and masses of broken mountains, covering the three sides of the staircase. The scene is represented without dignity, dramatic force, or harmony of composition. The drawing throughout is feeble, the colouring heavy and tame, the execution unskilful. Longhi had no notion how to work in fresco, differing herein notably from his illustrious contemporary Tiepolo. A vulgar Jove, particularly vulgar in the declamatory sweep of his left hand, a vulgar Juno, with a sneering, tittering leer upon her common face, reveal the painter's want of

sympathy with mythological grandeur. The Titans are a confused heap of brawny, sprawling nudities — studied, perhaps from gondoliers or stevedores, but showing a want of even academical adroitness in their ill-drawn extremities and inadequate foreshortenings. It was essential in such a subject that movement should be suggested. Yet Longhi has contrived to make the falling rocks and lurid clouds look as though they were irremovably wedged into their places on the walls, while his ruining giants are clearly transcripts from naked models in repose. Here and there upon the ceiling we catch a note of graceful fancy, especially in a group of lightly-painted goddesses, — elegant and natural female figures, draped in pale blues and greens and pinks, with a silvery illumination from the upper sky. But the somewhat effeminate sweetness of this episode is ill-combined with the dull and impotent striving after violent effect in the main subject; and the whole composition leaves upon our mind the impression of "sound and fury, signifying nothing."

III.

It is singular that Longhi should have reached the age of thirty-two without discovering his real vocation. The absence of brain-force in the conception, of strength in the design, and of any effective adaptation to architecture, which damns these decorative frescoes, is enough to prove that he was here engaged on work, for which he had no faculty and felt no sympathy.

What revealed to him the true bias of his talent? Did he perchance, just about this period, come across some prints from Hogarth? That is very possible. But the records of his life are so hopelessly meagre that it were useless to indulge in conjecture.

I am not aware whether he had already essayed any of those domestic pieces and delineative scenes from social life, which displayed his genuine artistic power, and for the sake of which his name will always be appreciated. He is said to have been of a gay, capricious temperament, delighting in the superficial aspects of aristocratic society, savouring the humours of the common folk with no less pleasure, and enjoying all

phases of that easy-going carnival gaiety, in which the various classes met and mingled at Venice. These inclinations directed him at last into the right path. For some forty years he continued to paint a series of easel-pictures, none of them very large, some of them quite small, in which the Vanity Fair of Venice at his epoch was represented with fidelity and kindly feeling.

The panels attributed to Pietro Longhi are innumerable. They may be found scattered through public galleries and private collections, adorning the walls of patrician palaces, or thrust away in corners of country houses. He worked carefully, polished the surface of his pictures to the finish of a miniature, set them in frames of a fixed pattern, and covered them with glass. These genre-pictures, while presenting notes of similarity, differ very considerably in their technical handling and their scheme of colour. Our first inference, after inspecting a miscellaneous selection, is that Longhi must have started a school of imitators. Indeed this is probably the case; and it is certain that some pieces ascribed to his brush are the productions of his son Alessandro, who

was born in 1733. Yet closer study of authentic paintings by Pietro's hand compels the critic to be cautious before he rejects, on internal evidence of style, a single piece assigned by good tradition to this artist. The Museco Civico at Venice, for example, contains a large number of Longhis, some of which seem to fall below his usual standard. I have, however, discovered elaborate drawings for these doubtful pictures in the book of his original sketches, which is also preserved there. Longhi must therefore have painted the pictures himself, or must have left the execution of his designs to a pupil. Again, the style of his two masterpieces (the *Sala del Ridotto* and the *Parlatorio d'un Convento*, both in the Museo Civico) differs in important particulars from that of the elaborately finished little panels by which he is most widely known. These fine compositions are marked by a freer breadth of handling, a sketchy boldness, a combined richness and subtlety of colouring, and an animation of figures in movement, which are not common in the average of his genre-pieces. When I come to speak of the family portrait of the Pisani, signed by his name, I

shall have to point out that the style of execution, the scheme of colour, and the pictorial feeling of this large group belong to a manner dissimilar from either of those, which I have already indicated as belonging to authentic Longhis.

IV.

It has been well observed by a Venetian writer, whose meagre panegyric is nearly all we have in print upon the subject of this painter's biography, that "there is no scene or point of domestic life which he has not treated many times and in divers ways. All those episodes which make up the Day of a Gentleman, as sung at a later date by Parini, had been already set forth by the brush of Longhi."[1]

The duties of the toilette, over which ladies and young men of fashion dawdled through their mornings; the drinking of chocolate in bed, attended by a wife or mistress or obsequious man of business; the long hours spent before the looking-glass,

1 See V. Lazari, Elogio di Pietro Longhi. Venezia, 1862.

with maids or valets matching complexions, sorting dresses from the wardrobe, and fixing patches upon telling points of cheek or forehead; the fashionable hair-dresser, building up a lady's tower with tongs, or tying the knot of a beau's bag-wig; the children trooping in to kiss their mother's hand at breakfast time — stiff little girls in hoops, and tiny *cavalieri* in uniform, with sword and shoe-buckles and queue; the vendors of flowered silks and laces laying out their wares; the pert young laundress smuggling a billet-doux into a beauty's hand before her unsuspecting husband's face; the fine gentleman ordering a waistcoat in the shop of a tailoress, ogling and flirting over the commission, while a running footman with tall cane in hand comes bustling in to ask if his lord's suit is ready; the old patrician lolling in his easy chair, and toying with a fan; the abbé turning over the leaves of some fresh play or morning paper: scenes like these we may assign to the Venetian forenoon.

Afternoon brings ceremonious visits, when grand ladies, sailing in their hoops, salute each other, and beaux make legs on entering a drawing-room, and lacqueys hand round

chocolate on silver salvers. Dancing-lessons may perhaps be assigned to this part of the day; a spruce French professor teaching his fair pupil how to drop a curtsey, or to swim with solemn grace through the figures of the minuet. At night we are introduced to the hall of the Ridotto; patricians in toga and snow-white periwig hold banks for faro beneath the glittering chandeliers; men and women, closely masked, jostle each other at the gambling-tables, where sequins and ducats lie about in heaps. The petty houses, or *casini*, now engage attention. Here may be seen a pair of stealthy, muffled libertines hastening to complete an assignation. Then there are meetings at street-corners, or on the landing-places of *traghetti* — mysterious figures flitting to and fro in wide miraculous *bautte* beneath the light of flickering flambeaux. Both men and women in these nocturnal scenes wear muffs, trimmed with fur, and secured around their waist by girdles.

Theatres, masked balls, banquets and coffee-houses, music parties in villa-gardens, the assemblies of literary coteries, promenades on the piazza, and carnival processions,

obtain their due share of attention from this vigilant observer. But, as is the way with Longhi, only episodes are treated. He does not, like some painters of our own time — like Mr. Frith, R.A., for instance — attempt to bring the accumulated details of a complex scene before us. He leaves the context of his chosen incident to be divined.

The traffic of the open streets — quack-doctors on their platforms with a crowd of gaping dupes around them, mountebanks performing tricks, the criers of stewed plums and sausages, fortune-tellers, itinerant musicians, improvisatory poets bawling out their octave stanzas, cloaked serenaders twangling mandolines — such motives may be found in fair abundance among Longhi's genre-pieces. Nor does he altogether neglect the country. Many of his pictures are devoted to hunting parties, riding-lessons, shooting and fishing, all the amusements of the Venetian *villeggiatura*. Peasants, lounging over their wine or pottage at a rustic table, are depicted with no less felicity than the beau and coquette in their glory. The grimy interior of a village tavern is portrayed with the same gusto as a fine lady's gilt saloon.

V.

LONGHI used to tell Goldoni that they —the painter and the playwright—were brethren in Art; and one of the poet's sonnets records this saying: —

"Longhi, tu che la mia musa sorella
Chiami del tuo pennel che cerca il vero."

It seems that their contemporaries were alive to the similar qualities and the common aims of the two men; for Gasparo Gozzi drew a parallel between them in a number of his Venetian Gazzetta. Indeed the resemblance is more than merely superficial. Longhi surveyed human life with the same kindly glance and the same absence of gravity or depth of intuition as Goldoni. They both studied nature, but nature only in her genial moods. They both sincerely aimed at truth, but avoided truths which were sinister or painful.

This renders the designation of Venetian Hogarth peculiarly inappropriate to Longhi. There is neither tragedy nor satire, and only a thin silvery vein of humour, in his work. Indeed it may be questioned whether he was in any exact sense humorous at all. What

looks like humour in some of his pictures is probably unconscious. In like manner he lacked pathos, and never strove to moralize the themes he treated. Where would Hogarth be if we excluded Gargantuan humour, Juvenalian satire, stern morality, and cruel pathos from his scenes of social life? Longhi is never gross and never passionate. With a kind of sensitive French curiosity he likes to graze the darker and the coarser side of life, and pass it by. He does not want to probe the cancers of the human breast, or to lay bare the festering sores of vice. What would become of Hogarth if he were deprived of his grim surgical anatomy? Neither in the heights nor in the depths was Longhi at home — neither in the region of Olympian poetry nor in the purgatory of man's sin and folly. He sailed delightfully, agreeably, across the middle waters of the world, where steering is not difficult.

In all this Goldoni resembles him, except only that Goldoni had a rich vein of cheerful humour. It would be therefore more just to call Longhi the Goldoni of painting than the Venetian Hogarth.

Longhi's portrait, unlike that of Goldoni, betrays no sensuousness. He seems to have had a long, refined face, with bright, benignant, dark eyes, a pleasantly smiling mouth, thin lips, and a look of gently subrisive appreciation rather than of irony or sarcasm. The engraving by which I know his features suggests an intelligent, attenuated Addison — not a powerful or first-rate man, but a genially observant superior mediocrity.

Although Longhi, as a personality, is clearly not of the same type as Hogarth, there are certain points of similarity between the men as artists. Both were taught the goldsmith's trade, and both learned painting under Bolognese influences. Both eventually found their sphere in the delineation of the life around them. There the similarity ceases. Longhi lacks, as I have said, the humour, the satire, the penetrative imagination, the broad sympathy with human nature in its coarser aspects, which make Hogarth unrivalled as a pictorial moralist. At the same time, it is difficult to imagine that Longhi was not influenced by Hogarth. In the technique of his art he has something which appears to be derived from the elder

and stronger master — a choice of points for observation, and arrangement of figures in groups, a mode of rendering attitude and suggesting movement; finally, the manner of execution reminds us of Hogarth. Longhi adandoned his false decorative style, the style of the Palazzo Sagredo, at some time after 1734. This date corresponds with Hogarth's triumphant entrance upon his career as a satirical painter of society. Possibly Longhi may have met with the engravings of the *Marriage à la Mode*, and have been stimulated by them to undertake the work, which he carried on with nothing of Hogarth's moral force, and with a small portion of his descriptive faculty, yet still with valuable results for the student of eighteenth century manners.

VI.

In 1763 an Academy for the study of the arts of design was opened by some members of the Pisani family in their palace at S. Stefano. The chiefs of that patrician house were four sons of the late Doge Alvise Pisani. According to Lazari, my sole authority for this passage in Longhi's biog-

raphy, the founder of the Academy was a Procuratore di S. Marco, who had a son of remarkable promise. This son he wished to instruct in the fine arts: and Pietro Longhi was chosen to fill the chair of painting, which he occupied for two years. At the end of that time, young Pisani died, and the institution was closed — now that the hopes which led to its foundation were extinguished.[1]

Among the few facts of Longhi's life this connection with the Pisani Academy has to be recorded. It is also of some importance in helping us to decide whether a large

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1 I have followed Lazari above. But examination of the Pisani pedigree (published for the Nozze Giusti-Giustiniani, Rovigo, Tip. Minelliana, 1887) shows that none of the Doge's sons was Procuratore di S. Marco, and that none of them had a son who died before marriage. The only Procuratore Pisani of this period was Giorgio Pisani (1739-1811), of the branch surnamed In Procuratia. He played a prominent part in the political history of the last days of the Venetian Republic. But he also had no son who can be connected with Lazari's story regarding the foundation of the Academy. I am obliged therefore to suppose that Lazari's account, though substantially correct as to the existence of the Academy in question, was based on a confused tradition.

portrait-picture, representing the chiefs of the Pisani family, together with the wife and children of one of its most eminent members (Luigi, a godchild of Louis XIV.), is rightly ascribed to him. The huge canvas, which is now in the possession of the Contessa Evelina Almorò Pisani, was found by her rolled up and hidden away in a cabinet beneath the grand staircase of the Palazzo Pisani at S. Stefano.[1] It proved to be in excellent preservation; and it is signed in large clear text letters — *Pietro Longhi.* So far there would seem to be no doubt that the picture is genuine; and I, for my part, am prepared to accept it as such, when I consider that Longhi enjoyed the confidence of the Pisani family, and presided over their Academy, about the period when it was executed. Yet the student of his works cannot fail to be struck by marked differences of style between this and other authentic pictures from his hand.

The central group consists of the noble

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1 The picture now hangs on the wall of Mme. Pisani's drawing-room in the Palazzo Barbaro on the Grand Canal of Venice.

Lady Paolina Gambara, wife of Luigi Pisani, seated with her children round her.[1] Her husband stands behind, together with his three brothers and an intimate friend of the house. Allegorical figures representing the arts and sciences complete the composition. In the distance is seen the princely palace of Strà upon the Brenta, which was designed in part by one of the Pisani brothers. The arrangement of these interconnected groups is excellent; the characterization of the several heads, admirable; the drawing, firm and accurate; and the whole scene is bathed in a glow of roseate colour which seems actually to radiate light. Longhi, so far as I am aware, produced nothing in the same style as this complicated masterpiece of portraiture and allegorical suggestion. In conception, execution, and scheme of colour, it reminds us of a French painter; and if he had left a series of such works, he might have deserved what now seems the inappropriate title of the Venetian Boucher.

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1 The eldest of these children was born in 1753, and may have been about seven when the picture was painted.

I cannot pretend to have seen more than a small portion of Longhi's pictures. But this portrait of the Pisani family detaches itself as something in a different key of feeling and of workmanship from any with which I am acquainted. Admirers of his art should not fail to pay it the attention it deserves; and if the day comes when a thorough study of this interesting master shall be made, it is not impossible that genuine paintings in the same manner may be discovered.

VII.

A SERIES of frescoes attributed to Pietro Longhi should also here be mentioned. They decorate three sides of the staircase of the Palazzo Sina (formerly Grassi) on the Grand Canal. The balustrades of an open loggia or gallery are painted with bold architectural relief. Behind the pilasters of this balcony a motley company of life-sized figures promenade or stand about in groups. Some are entering in carnival costume, with masks and long mantles. Others wear the gala dress of the last century. Elderly ladies are draped in the black *zendado* of Venetian

aristocracy. Grave senators bend their courtly heads beneath the weight of snowy periwigs. Lacqueys in livery and running footmen in Albanian costume wait upon the guests, handing chocolate or wines on silver trays. This scene of fashionable life is depicted with vivacity; the studies of face and attitude are true to nature; an agreeable air of good tone and sober animation pervades the whole society. Probably many of the persons introduced were copied from the life; for it is reported of Longhi that one of his greatest merits was the dexterity with which he reproduced the main actors in the *bel monde* of Venice — so that folk could recognize their acquaintances upon his canvas merely by the carriage of their mask and domino.

Owing to restoration, it is difficult to say how far the fresco-painting was well executed, and to what extent the original tone has been preserved. At present the colouring is somewhat chalky, dull, and lifeless; and I suspect Longhi's brush-work suffered considerably when the palace was internally remodelled some years ago.

VIII.

It only remains to speak of Pietro Longhi's sketch-book. This collection of original drawings, numbering 140 pieces, and containing a very large variety of studies (several pages being filled on front and back with upwards of ten separate figures) was formed by Alessandro Longhi. It came into the possession of the patrician Teodoro Correr, who bequeathed it, together with the rest of his immense museum, to the town of Venice.

As a supplement to Longhi's paintings, this sketch-book is invaluable. It brings us close to the artist's methods, aims, and personal predilections in the choice of motives. Most of the drawings are done in hard black pencil or chalk, heightened and corrected with white; a few in soft red chalk. Unfortunately, they have suffered to a large extent from rubbing, and this injury is likely to increase with time, owing to the clumsy binding of the volume which contains them.

Studies from the nude are conspicuous by their extreme rarity and want of force. Great

attention has been paid to the details of costume and furniture. The *zendado*, the *bautta*, the hoop, the bag-wig, the fop's coat and waistcoat, the patrician's civil mantle, the knee-breeches and stockings of a well-dressed gentleman, are copied and re-copied with loving care. Painters at the easel, ballet-girls with castanets, maid-servants holding trays, grooms and lacqueys, men on horseback, serenaders with lute or mandoline, ballad-singers, music and dancing-masters, women working at lace-pillows, gentlemen in bed, sportsmen discharging their fowling-pieces, gondoliers rowing, little girls in go-carts or fenced chairs, sellers of tarts in the street, country boys in taverns, chests of drawers, pots, pans, jugs, gourds, wine-flasks, parrots in cages, ladies at the clavichord, queues, fans, books, snuff-boxes, tables, petticoats, desks, the draperies of doors and windows, wigs, footmen placing chairs for guests, beaux bowing in the doorway or whispering tender nothings at a beauty's ear, old men reclining in arm-chairs, embroiderers at work, muffs, copper water-buckets, nurses with babies in their arms, silver plate of all descriptions: — such is the

farrago of this multiform and graceful, but limited, series of transcripts from the world of visible objects. It is clear that Longhi thought "the proper study of mankind is man"; — and man as principally a clothed, sociable, well-behaved animal.

His sketches are remarkable for their strenuous sincerity — their search after the right attitude, their serious effort to hit the precise line wanted, their suggested movement and seizure of life in the superficies. They have a sustained air of good breeding, refined intelligence, and genial sympathy with the prose of human nature. Landscape might never have existed so far as Longhi was concerned. I do not think that a tree, a cloud, or even a flower will be found among the miscellaneous objects he so carefully studied and drew so deftly. The world he moved in was the world of men and women meeting on the surface-paths of daily intercourse. Even here, we do not detect the slightest interest in passionate or painful aspects of experience. All Longhi's people are well-to-do and placid in their different degrees. The peasants in the taverns do not brawl, nor the fine gentlemen fight duels,

nor the lovers in the drawing-rooms quarrel. He seems to have overlooked beggary, disease, and every form of vice or suffering. He does not care for animals. With the exception of a parrot, a caged canary, and a stiffly drawn riding-horse, the brute creation is not represented in these sketches. No sarcasm, no grossness, no violence of any kind, disturbs the calm artistic seriousness, the sweet painstaking curiosity of his mental mood. The execution throughout is less robust than sensitively delicate. We feel a something French, a suggestion of Watteau's elysium of fashion, in his touch on things. In fine, the sketch-book corroborates the impression made on us by Longhi's finished pictures.

IX.

With all his limitations of character and artistic scope, Longhi remains a very interesting and highly respectable painter. In an age of social corruption he remained free from impurity, and depicted only what was blameless and of good repute. We cannot study his work without surmising that manners in Italy were more refined than

in our own country at that epoch — a conclusion to which we are also led by Goldoni's, Carlo Gozzi's, and even Casanova's Memoirs. Morally licentious and politically decadent, the Venetians undoubtedly were. But they were neither brutal, nor cruel, nor savage, nor sottish. Even the less admirable aspects of their social life — its wasteful luxury and effeminate indulgence in pleasure — have been treated with so much reserve by this humane artist, that youth and innocence can suffer no contamination from the study of his works. At the same time they are delightful for their gracious realism, for their naïve touch upon the follies of the period. Those who love to dream themselves back into the days of hoops and perukes — and there are many such among us now — should not neglect to make themselves acquainted with Pietro Longhi.

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1 G. B. Tiepolo; b. 1692, d. 1769. Antonio Canale, or Canaletti; b. 1697, d. 1768. Pietro Longhi; b. 1702, d. about 1780. Francesco Guardi; b. 1712, d. 1793.

The Bibelot

SUCH is the staying quality of all true Art that the Artist himself often partakes of the same unconditional immortality. In other words it is difficult for us to associate old age with the Man or Woman who has produced verse which will live when we who read and they who write are gone alike to dust:—

"Deaf the praised ear and mute the tuneful tongue."

This is particularly true when we consider Mr. Austin Dobson who was born in 1840, and now at an age when most men have done their best still reminds us by his latest work that he *at least has not fallen upon mournful silence.*[1]

Proverbs in Porcelain *were first published entire in 1877, and have since passed*

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1 *The* Collected Poems *of Mr. Dobson can now be had in one comely octavo. (London, 1897.) It is interesting to know that Mr. Edmund Gosse has collected and just issued a privately printed* Carmina Votiva — *125 copies all told — which contains some three score pieces not now to be found in any of Dobson's published volumes.*

through many editions.[2] *It would be impossible to find more exquisite specimens of lapidary art. Mr. Stedman has already pointed out their "dainty workmanship and comprehension of the spirit of an age." Still later he has characterized them as "bits of 'Louis Quinze' and perfectly unique in English verse. Nothing can excel the beauty and pathos of 'Good-Night, Babette,' with the Angelus song low-blended in its dying fall."*[3] *Do they not also in a subtle, far-off way, remind us of a little suite in dance music — suggestions of days and nights remote, withdrawn: a curious crepuscular melody of exquisite minor modulation — a beseeching little sigh which almost sings us and itself asleep?*

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2 A Bibliography of Austin Dobson Attempted by Francis Edwin Murray. *Derby (England) 1900. Oblong crown 8vo, pp. xx+348. A more detestable format for a most remarkable achievement could not be imagined!*

3 Victorian Poets. *Pp. 473.*

FOR OCTOBER:

ÆS TRIPLEX,

By

ROBERT LOUIS STEVENSON.

PROVERBS IN PORCELAIN.

"Rien en relief."

"Oh, the song where not one of the Graces
Tight-laces,—
Where we woo the sweet Muses not starchly,
But archly,—

Where the verse, like the piper a-Maying,
Comes playing,—
And the rhyme is as gay as a dancer
In answer,—

It will last till men weary of pleasure
In measure!
It will last till men weary of laughter . . .
And after!

AUSTIN DOBSON.

"A PLEASANT memory connected with the appearance in 1873 of *Vignettes in Rhyme* is that the little book procured me the friendship of the author of *London Lyrics*. My second volume of verse, with the title prefixed to this note, was dedicated to him in words which — as they have not been recently reprinted — may be here preserved: —

TO FREDERICK LOCKER.

Is it to kindest Friend I send
  This nosegay gathered new?
Or is it more to Critic sure,—
  To Singer clear and true?
I know not which, indeed, nor need;
  All Three I found — in You."

AUSTIN DOBSON.
(Note in *Collected Poems*, p. 514.)

ASSUME *that we are friends. Assume*
A common taste for old costume,
Old pictures,— books. Then dream us sitting,—
Us two,— in some soft-lighted room.

Outside the wind; — the "ways are mire."
We, with our faces towards the fire,
Finished the feast not full but fitting,
Watch the light-leaping flames aspire.

Silent at first, in time we glow;
Discuss "eclectics," high and low;
Inspect engravings, 'twixt us passing
The fancies of DETROY, MOREAU;

"Reveils" and "Couchers," "Balls" and "Fêtes";
Anon we glide to "crocks" and plates,
Grow eloquent on glaze and classing,
And half-pathetic over "states."

Then I produce my Prize, in truth; —
Six groups in SÈVRES, *fresh as Youth,*
And rare as Love. You pause, you wonder,
(Pretend to doubt the marks, forsooth!)

And so we fall to why and how
The fragile figures smile and bow;
Divine, at length, the fable under . . .
Thus grew the "Scenes" that follow now.

THE BALLAD À-LA-MODE.

"Tout vient à point à qui peut attendre."

SCENE. — *A Boudoir Louis-Quinze, painted with Cupids shooting at Butterflies.*

THE COUNTESS. THE BARON (*her cousin and suitor*).

THE COUNTESS (*looking up from her work*).

BARON, you doze.

THE BARON (*closing his book*).

I, Madame? No.
I wait your order — Stay or Go.

THE COUNTESS.

Which means, I think, that Go or Stay
Affects you nothing, either way.

THE BARON.

Excuse me, — By your favour graced,
My inclinations are effaced.

THE COUNTESS.

Or much the same. How keen you grow!
You must be reading MARIVAUX.

THE BARON.

Nay, — 'twas a song of SAINTE-AULAIRE.

THE COUNTESS.

Then read me one. We've time to spare:
If I can catch the clock-face there,
'Tis barely eight.

THE BARON.

What shall it be,—
A tale of woe, or perfidy?

THE COUNTESS.

Not woes, I beg. I doubt your woes:
But perfidy, of course, one knows.

THE BARON (*reads*).

" '*Ah, Phillis! cruel Phillis!*
(*I heard a Shepherd say,*)
You hold me with your Eyes, and yet
You bid me — Go my Way!'

" '*Ah, Colin! foolish Colin!*
(*The Maiden answered so,*)
If that be All, the Ill is small,
I close them — You may go!'

"*But when her eyes she opened,*
(*Although the sun it shone,*)
She found the Shepherd had not stirred —
'Because the Light was gone!'

"*Ah, Cupid! wanton Cupid!*
'Twas ever thus your way:

When Maids would bid you ply your Wings,
You find Excuse to stay!"

THE COUNTESS.

Famous! He earned whate'er he got:—
But there 's some sequel, is there not?

THE BARON (*turning the page*).

I think not.—No. Unless 'tis this:
My fate is far more hard than his;—
In fact, *your* Eyes—

THE COUNTESS.

Now, that 's a breach!
Your bond is—not to make a speech.
And we must start—so call JUSTINE.
I know exactly what you mean!—
Give me your arm—

THE BARON.

If, in return,
Countess, I could your hand but earn!

THE COUNTESS.

I thought as much. This comes, you see,
Of sentiment, and Arcady,
Where vows are hung on every tree. . .

THE BARON (*offering his arm, with a low bow*).

And no one dreams—of PERFIDY.

THE METAMORPHOSIS.

"On s' enrichit quand on dort."

SCENE.—*A high stone Seat in an Alley of clipped Lime-trees.*

THE ABBÉ TIRILI. MONSIEUR L'ÉTOILE.

THE ABBÉ (*writing*).

"THIS *shepherdess Dorine adored*—"
What rhyme is next? *Implored?—ignored?*
Poured?—soared?—afford? That facile Dunce,
L'ÉTOILE, would cap the line at once.
'Twill come in time. Meanwhile, suppose
We take a meditative doze.
(*Sleeps. By-and-by his paper falls.*)

M. L'ÉTOILE (*approaching from the back*).

Some one before me. What! 'tis you,
Monsieur the Scholar? Sleeping too!
(*Picks up the fluttering paper.*)
More "*Tales*," of course. One can't refuse
To chase so fugitive a Muse!
Verses are public, too, that fly
"*Cum privilegio*"—*Zephyri!*
(*Reads.*)
"CLITANDER AND DORINE." Insane!
He fancies he's a LA FONTAINE!

"*In early Days, the Gods, we find,*
Paid casual Visits to Mankind;—
At least, authentic Records say so
In Publius Ovidius Naso."
(Three names for one. This passes all.
'Tis "furiously" classical!)
"*No doubt their Purpose oft would be*
Some 'Nodus dignus Vindice';
'On dit,' not less, these earthly Tours
Were mostly matters of Amours.
And woe to him whose luckless Flame
Impeded that Olympic Game;
Ere he could say an 'Ave' o'er,
They changed him — like a Louis-d'or."
("*Aves*," and current coinage! O!—
O shade of NICHOLAS BOILEAU!)
"*Bird, Beast, or River he became:*
With Women it was much the same.
In Ovid Case to Case succeeds;
But Names the Reader never reads."
(That is, Monsieur the Abbé feels
His quantities are out at heels!)
"*Suffices that, for this our Tale,*
There dwelt in a Thessalian Vale,
Of Tales like this the frequent Scene,
A Shepherdess, by name Dorine.
Trim Waist, ripe Lips, bright Eyes, had she;—
In short, — the whole Artillery.

Her Beauty made some local Stir;—
Men marked it. So did Jupiter.
This Shepherdess Dorine adored. . ."
Implored, ignored, and *soared,* and *poured*—
(He 's scrawled them here!) We 'll sum in brief
His fable on his second leaf.

(*Writes.*)

There, they shall know who 'twas that wrote:—

"L'Étoile's *is but a mock-bird's note.*" [*Exit.*

The Abbé (*waking*).

Implored 's the word, I think. But where,—
Where is my paper? Ah! 'tis there!
Eh! what?

(*Reads.*)

The Metamorphosis.

(not *in Ovid.*)

"*The Shepherdess Dorine adored*
The Shepherd-Boy Clitander;
But Jove himself, Olympus' Lord,
The Shepherdess Dorine adored.

Our Abbé's Aid the Pair Implored;—
And changed to Goose and Gander,
The Shepherdess Dorine adored
The Shepherd-Boy Clitander!"

L'ÉTOILE, — by all the Muses!
Peste!
He 's off, post-haste, to tell the rest.
No matter. Laugh, Sir Dunce, to-day;
Next time 'twill be *my* turn to play.

THE SONG OUT OF SEASON.

"Point de culte sans mystère."

SCENE.— *A Corridor in a Château, with Busts and Venice chandeliers.*

MONSIEUR L'ÉTOILE. TWO VOICES.

M. L'ÉTOILE (*carrying a Rose*).

THIS is the place. MUTINE said here.
"Through the Mancini room, and near
The fifth Venetian chandelier. . ."
The fifth? — She knew there were but four; —
Still, here 's the *busto* of the Moor.

(*Humming.*)

Tra-la, tra-la! If BIJOU wake,
She 'll bark, no doubt, and spoil my shake!
I 'll tap, I think. One can't mistake;
This surely is the door.

(*Sings softly.*)

"*When Jove, the Skies' Director,*
First saw you sleep of yore,
He cried aloud for Nectar,
'The Nectar quickly pour, —
The Nectar, Hebe, pour!' "

(No sound. I 'll tap once more.)

(*Sings again.*)

"*Then came the Sire Apollo,*
He past you where you lay;
'*Come, Dian, rise and follow*
The dappled Hart to slay,—
The rapid Hart to slay.'"

(*A rustling within.*)

(Coquette! She heard before.)

(*Sings again.*)

"*And urchin Cupid after*
Beside the Pillow curled,
He whispered you with Laughter,
'*Awake and witch the World,—*
O Venus, witch the World!'"

(Now comes the last. 'Tis scarcely worse, I think, than Monsieur l'Abbé's verse.)

"*So waken, waken, waken,*
O You, whom we adore!
Where Gods can be mistaken,
Mere Mortals must be more,—
Poor Mortals must be more!"

(That merits an *encore!*)

"*So waken, waken, waken!*
O YOU *whom we adore!*"

(*An energetic* VOICE.)

'Tis thou, ANTOINE? Ah, Addle-pate!
Ah, Thief of Valet, always late!
Have I not told thee half-past eight
A thousand times!

(*Great agitation.*)

But wait, — but wait, —

M. L'ÉTOILE (*stupefied*).

Just Skies! What hideous roar! —
What lungs! The infamous Soubrette!
This is a turn I sha'n't forget: —
To make me sing my *chansonnette*
Before old JOURDAIN'S door!

(*Retiring slowly.*)

And yet, and yet, — it can't be she.
They prompted her. Who can it be?

(*A second* VOICE.)

IT WAS THE ABBÉ TI—RI—LI!

(*In a mocking falsetto.*)

"*Where Gods can be mistaken,*
Mere Poets must be more, —
BAD POETS *must be more.*"

THE CAP THAT FITS.

"Qui sème épines n'aille déchaux."

SCENE.—*A Salon with blue and white Panels. Outside, Persons pass and re-pass upon a Terrace.*

HORTENSE. ARMANDE. MONSIEUR LOYAL.

HORTENSE (*behind her fan*).

NOT young, I think.

ARMANDE (*raising her eye-glass*).

And faded, too!—
Quite faded! Monsieur, what say you?

M. LOYAL.

Nay,—I defer to you. In truth,
To me she seems all grace and youth.

HORTENSE.

Graceful? You think it? What, with hands
That hand like this (*with a gesture*).

ARMANDE.

And how she stands

M. LOYAL.

Nay,—I am wrong again. I thought
Her air delightfully untaught!

HORTENSE.

But you amuse me —

M. LOYAL.

Still her dress, —
Her dress at least, you *must* confess —

ARMANDE.

Is odious simply! JACOTOT
Did not supply that lace, I know;
And where, I ask, has mortal seen
A hat unfeathered!

HORTENSE.

Edged with green!

M. LOYAL.

The words remind me. Let me say
A Fable that I heard to-day.
Have I permission?

BOTH (*with enthusiasm*).

Monsieur, pray!

M. LOYAL.

"*Myrtilla* (*lest a Scandal rise*
The Lady's Name I thus disguise),
Dying of Ennui, once decided, —
Much on Resource herself she prided, —

To choose a Hat. Forthwith she flies
On that momentous Enterprise.
Whether to Petit or Legros,
I know not: only this I know;—
Head-dresses then, of any Fashion,
Bore Names of Quality or Passion.
Myrtilla tried them, almost all:
'Prudence,' she felt, was somewhat small;
'Retirement' seemed the Eyes to hide;
'Content' at once she cast aside.
'Simplicity,'—'twas out of place;
'Devotion,' for an older face;
Briefly, Selection smaller grew,
'Vexatious! odious!'—none would do!
Then, on a sudden, she espied
One that she thought she had not tried:
Becoming, rather,—'edged with green,'—
Roses in yellow, Thorns between.
'Quick! Bring me that!' 'Tis brought. 'Complete,
Divine, Enchanting, Tasteful, Neat,'
In all the Tones. 'And this you call—?'
'"ILL-NATURE," Madame. It fits all.'"

HORTENSE.

A thousand thanks! So naïvely turned!

ARMANDE.

So useful too . . . to those concerned!
'Tis yours?

Ah no, — some cynic wit's;
And called (I think) —
(*Placing his hat upon his breast*),
"The Cap that Fits."

THE SECRETS OF THE HEART.

"Le cœur mène où il va."

SCENE.—*A Chalet covered with Honeysuckle.*

NINETTE. NINON.

NINETTE.

THIS way—

NINON.

No, this way—

NINETTE.

This way, then.

(*They enter the Chalet.*)

You are as changing, Child,—as Men.

NINON.

But are they? Is it true, I mean?
Who said it?

NINETTE.

Sister SÉRAPHINE.
She was so pious and so good,
With such sad eyes beneath her hood,
And such poor little feet,—all bare!
Her name was EUGÉNIE LA FÈRE.

She used to tell us, — moonlight nights, —
When I was at the Carmelites.

NINON.

Ah, then it must be right. And yet,
Suppose for once — suppose, NINETTE —

NINETTE.

But what? —

NINON.

Suppose it were not so?
Suppose there *were* true men, you know!

NINETTE.

And then?

NINON.

Why, — if that could occur,
What kind of man should you prefer?

NINETTE.

What looks, you mean?

NINON.

Looks, voice and all.

NINETTE.

Well, as to that, he must be tall,
Or say, not "tall," — of middle size;

And next, he must have laughing eyes,
And a hook-nose, — with, underneath,
O! what a row of sparkling teeth! —

NINON (*touching her cheek suspiciously*).

Has he a scar on this side?

NINETTE.

Hush!
Someone is coming. No; a thrush:
I see it swinging there.

NINON.

Go on.

NINETTE.

Then he must fence, (ah, look, 'tis gone!)
And dance like Monseigneur, and sing
"Love was a Shepherd": — everything
That men do. Tell me yours, NINON.

NINON.

Shall I? Then mine has black, black hair. . .
I mean he *should* have; then an air
Half sad, half noble; features thin;
A little *royale* on the chin;
And such a pale, high brow. And then,
He is a prince of gentlemen; —
He, too, can ride and fence and write,

Sonnets and madrigals, yet fight
No worse for that —

NINETTE.

I know your man.

NINON.

And I know yours. But you 'll not tell, —
Swear it!

NINETTE.

I swear upon this fan, —
My Grandmother's!

NINON.

And I, I swear
On this old turquoise *reliquaire*, —
My great, — *great* Grandmother's! !—

(*After a pause.*)

NINETTE!
I feel *so* sad.

NINETTE.

I too. But why?

NINON.

Alas, I know not!

NINETTE (*with a sigh*).

Nor do I.

"GOOD-NIGHT, BABETTE!"

"Si vieillesse pouvait!—"

SCENE.—*A small neat Room. In a high Voltaire Chair sits a white-haired old Gentleman.*

MONSIEUR VIEUXBOIS. BABETTE.

M. VIEUXBOIS (*turning querulously*).

DAY of my life! Where *can* she get?
BABETTE! I say! BABETTE!—BABETTE!

BABETTE (*entering hurriedly*).

Coming, M'sieu'! If M'sieu' speaks
So loud, he won't be well for weeks!

M. VIEUXBOIS.

Where have you been?

BABETTE.

Why M'sieu' knows:—
April! . . . Ville-d'Avray! . . . Ma'am'selle ROSE!

M. VIEUXBOIS.

Ah! I am old,—and I forget.
Was the place growing green, BABETTE?

BABETTE.

But of a greenness! — yes, M'sieu'!
And then the sky so blue! — so blue!
And when I dropped my *immortelle*,
How the birds sang!
(*Lifting her apron to her eyes.*)
This poor Ma'am'selle!

M. VIEUXBOIS.

You 're a good girl, BABETTE, but she, —
She was an Angel, verily.
Sometimes I think I see her yet
Stand smiling by the cabinet;
And once, I know, she peeped and laughed
Betwixt the curtains . . .
Where 's the draught?
(*She gives him a cup.*)
Now I shall sleep, I think, BABETTE; —
Sing me your Norman *Chansonnette.*

BABETTE (*sings*).

"*Once at the Angelus*
(*Ere I was dead*),
Angels all glorious
Came to my Bed; —
Angels in blue and white
Crowned on the Head."

M. VIEUXBOIS (*drowsily*).

"She was an Angel" . . . "Once she laughed" . . .
What, was I dreaming?
Where 's the draught?

BABETTE (*showing the empty cup*).

The draught, M'sieu'?

M. VIEUXBOIS.

How I forget!
I am so old! But sing, BABETTE!

BABETTE (*sings*).

"One was the Friend I left
Stark in the Snow;
One was the Wife that died
Long,— long ago;
One was the Love I lost . . .
How could she know?"

M. VIEUXBOIS (*murmuring*).

Ah, PAUL! . . . old PAUL! . . . EULALIE too!
And ROSE . . . And O! "the sky so blue!"

BABETTE (*sings*).

"One had my Mother's eyes,
Wistful and mild;

One had my Father's face;
One was a Child:
All of them bent to me,—
Bent down and smiled!"

(He is asleep!)

M. VIEUXBOIS (*almost inaudibly*).

"How I forget!"
"I am so old!" . . . "Good-night, BABETTE!"

EPILOGUE.

HEIGHO! *how chill the evenings get!*
Good-night, NINON! — *good-night,* NINETTE!
Your little Play is played and finished;—
Go back, then, to your Cabinet!

LOYAL, L'ÉTOILE! *no more to-day!*
Alas! they heed not what we say:
They smile with ardour undiminished;
But we,—we are not always gay!

The Bibelot

Vattene in pace, alma beata e bella.—
(Go in peace, soul beautiful and blessed.—)

WHATEVER *new light may be thrown upon the career of the most fascinating personality of this or any other age, it would scarcely seem possible that we could come to know Robert Louis Stevenson more intimately, who in all lovable essentials* was *known to us twenty years ago.*[1] *At that time* Virginibus Puerisque *assured the world of a new-risen essayist ranking with Lamb and Hazlitt; and what manner of man that meant has since been "writ large."*

Of the essays constituting this first volume the one we now reprint seems in many ways the most purely ex cathedra; *in the later* Christmas Sermon,[2] *Stevenson*

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1 *In the immediately forthcoming Life of Robert Louis Stevenson by his cousin, Mr. Graham Balfour, we shall doubtless get what we failed to find in Mr. Sidney Colvin's two volumes of* Letters. *This indeed was premised by Mr. Colvin's introduction, his own work being by no means superseded but rather reinforced and rounded out to completion by the authoritative biography now in press.*

2 *First published in* Scribner's Magazine *for December, 1888, and since then issued in book form,*

employs the same unforgettable language of our own familiar friend. "No man knows better than I that, as we go on in life we must part from prettiness and the graces. We but attain qualities to lose them; life is a series of farewells even in art; even our proficiencies are deciduous and evanescent." [3] *True, but what splendid service came of his art; out of his life what a trumpet-call to doing out the duty!—*

> *"Nothing is here for tears, nothing to wail,*
> *Or knock the breast; no weakness, no contempt,*
> *Dispraise or blame; nothing but well and fair."*

For in reading Æs Triplex *we may well consider this fact in passing:—many have been the discourses on Death, from the great Emperor's down to our own day, but no one of them all ever approached "the Shadow unbeheld" with such courageous humanism,—and here forsooth his heart beat highest:—* Æs Triplex *was rightly named.*

So passes one of the lords of life. "O man greatly beloved, go thou thy way till

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(*New York, Scribners, 1900*). *12 mo. bds. Pp. iv-26. 50 cents.*

3 *See* The Letters of Robert Louis Stevenson, *Vol. II, pp. 339-340. Quoted from a letter to Marcel Schwob who had sent Stevenson a copy of his recently published* Mimes.

the end, for thou shalt rest, and stand in thy lot at the end of the days." Barely seven years ago! And yet the world of men and women and little children who loved him cannot make the Master dead. Surely "some late lark is singing" there for him who travelled hence, even as for those who now move toward that rest for each and all men born.

"Sleep sweetly, tender heart in peace;
Sleep, holy spirit, blessed soul,
While the stars burn, the moons increase,
And the great ages onward roll.

Sleep till the end, true soul and sweet,
Nothing comes to thee new or strange,
Sleep, full of rest from head to feet,
Lie still, dry dust, secure of change."

FOR NOVEMBER:
CELTIC:
By
FIONA MACLEOD.

"An unconscionable time a-dying—there is the picture ('I am afraid, gentlemen') of your life and of mine. The sands run out, and the hours are 'numbered and imputed' and the days go by; and, when the last of these finds us, we have been a long time dying, and what else? The very length is something, if we reach that hour of separation undishonoured; and to have lived at all is doubtless (in the soldierly expression) to have served."

(A CHRISTMAS SERMON.)

Out of the night that covers me,
Black as the pit from pole to pole,
I thank whatever gods may be
For my unconquerable soul.

In the fell clutch of circumstance
I have not winced or cried aloud,
Under the bludgeonings of chance
My head is bloody but unbowed.

Beyond this place of wrath and tears
Looms but the Horror of the shade,
And yet the menace of the years
Finds, and shall find me, unafraid.

It matters not how strait the gate,
How charged with punishments the scroll,
I am the master of my fate:
I am the captain of my soul.

WILLIAM ERNEST HENLEY.

PROEM

To be honest, to be kind — to earn a little and to spend a little less, to make upon the whole a family happier for his presence, to renounce when that shall be necessary and not be embittered, to keep a few friends but these without capitulation — above all, on the same grim condition, to keep friends with himself — here is a task for all that a man has of fortitude and delicacy. He has an ambitious soul who would ask more; he has a hopeful spirit who should look in such an enterprise to be successful. There is indeed one element in human destiny that not blindness itself can controvert: whatever else we are intended to do, we are not intended to succeed; failure is the fate allotted. . . .

Life is not designed to minister to a man's vanity. He goes upon his long business most of the time with a hanging head, and all the time like a blind child. Full of rewards and pleasures as it is — so that to

see the day break or the moon rise, or to meet a friend, or to hear the dinner-call when he is hungry, fills him with surprising joys — this world is yet for him no abiding city. Friendships fall through, health fails, weariness assails him; year after year, he must thumb the hardly varying record of his own weakness and folly. It is a friendly process of detachment. When the time comes that he should go, there need be few illusions left about himself. *Here lies one who meant well, tried a little, failed much:* — surely that may be his epitaph, of which he need not be ashamed.

ROBERT LOUIS STEVENSON.

(From *A Christmas Sermon.*)

THE changes wrought by death are in themselves so sharp and final, and so terrible and melancholy in their consequences, that the thing stands alone in man's experience, and has no parallel upon earth. It outdoes all other accidents because it is the last of them. Sometimes it leaps suddenly upon its victims, like a Thug; sometimes it lays a regular siege and creeps upon their citadel during a score of years. And when the business is done, there is sore havoc made in other people's lives, and a pin knocked out by which many subsidiary friendships hung together. There are empty chairs, solitary walks, and single beds at night. Again, in taking away our friends, death does not take them away utterly, but leaves behind a mocking, tragical, and soon intolerable residue, which must be hurriedly concealed. Hence a whole chapter of sights and customs striking to the mind, from the pyramids of Egypt to the gibbets and dule trees of mediæval Europe. The poorest persons have a bit of pageant going towards the tomb; memorial stones are set up over the least memorable; and, in order to preserve some show of respect for what remains

of our old loves and friendships, we must accompany it with much grimly ludicrous ceremonial, and the hired undertaker parades before the door. All this, and much more of the same sort, accompanied by the eloquence of poets, has gone a great way to put humanity in error; nay, in many philosophies the error has been embodied and laid down with every circumstance of logic; although in real life the bustle and swiftness, in leaving people little time to think, have not left them time enough to go dangerously wrong in practice.

As a matter of fact, although few things are spoken of with more fearful whisperings than this prospect of death, few have less influence on conduct under healthy circumstances. We have all heard of cities in South America built upon the side of fiery mountains, and how, even in this tremendous neighborhood, the inhabitants are not a jot more impressed by the solemnity of mortal conditions than if they were delving gardens in the greenest corner of England. There are serenades and suppers and much gallantry among the myrtles overhead; and meanwhile the foundation shudders under-

foot, the bowels of the mountain growl, and at any moment living ruin may leap sky-high into the moonlight, and tumble man and his merrymaking in the dust. In the eyes of very young people, and very dull old ones, there is something indescribably reckless and desperate in such a picture. It seems not credible that respectable married people, with umbrellas, should find appetite for a bit of supper within quite a long distance of a fiery mountain; ordinary life begins to smell of high-handed debauch when it is carried on so close to a catastrophe; and even cheese and salad, it seems, could hardly be relished in such circumstances without something like a defiance of the Creator. It should be a place for nobody but hermits dwelling in prayer and maceration, or mere born-devils drowning care in a perpetual carouse.

And yet, when one comes to think upon it calmly, the situation of these South American citizens forms only a very pale figure for the state of ordinary mankind. This world itself, travelling blindly and swiftly in overcrowded space, among a million other worlds travelling blindly and swiftly in con-

trary directions, may very well come by a knock that would set it into explosion like a penny squib. And what, pathologically looked at, is the human body, with all its organs, but a mere bagful of petards? The least of these is as dangerous to the whole economy as the ship's powder-magazine to the ship; and with every breath we breathe, and every meal we eat, we are putting one or more of them in peril. If we clung as devotedly as some philosophers pretend we do to the abstract idea of life, or were half as frightened as they make out we are for the subversive accident that ends it all, the trumpets might sound by the hour and no one would follow them into battle — the blue-peter might fly at the truck, but who would climb into a sea-going ship? Think (if these philosophers were right) with what a preparation of spirit we should affront the daily peril of the dinner-table: a deadlier spot than any battle-field in history, where the far greater proportion of our ancestors have miserably left their bones! What woman would ever be lured into marriage, so much more dangerous than the wildest sea? And what would it be to grow old?

For, after a certain distance, every step we take in life we find the ice growing thinner below our feet, and all around us and behind us we see our contemporaries going through. By the time a man gets well into the seventies, his continued existence is a mere miracle; and when he lays his old bones in bed for the night, there is an overwhelming probability that he will never see the day. Do the old men mind it, as a matter of fact? Why, no. They were never merrier; they have their grog at night, and tell the raciest stories; they hear of the death of people about their own age, or even younger, not as if it was a grisly warning, but with a simple childlike pleasure at having outlived some one else; and when a draught might puff them out like a guttering candle, or a bit of a stumble shatter them like so much glass, their old hearts keep sound and unaffrighted, and they go on, bubbling with laughter, through years of man's age compared to which the valley at Balaklava was as safe and peaceful as a village cricket-green on Sunday. It may fairly be questioned (if we look to the peril only) whether it was a much more daring feat for Curtius to plunge

into the gulf, than for any old gentleman of ninety to doff his clothes and clamber into bed.

Indeed, it is a memorable subject for consideration, with what unconcern and gayety mankind pricks on along the Valley of the Shadow of Death. The whole way is one wilderness of snares, and the end of it, for those who fear the last pinch, is irrevocable ruin. And yet we go spinning through it all, like a party for the Derby. Perhaps the reader remembers one of the humourous devices of the deified Caligula: how he encouraged a vast concourse of holiday-makers on to his bridge over Baiæ bay; and when they were in the height of their enjoyment, turned loose the Prætorian guards among the company, and had them tossed into the sea. This is no bad miniature of the dealings of nature with the transitory race of man. Only, what a checkered picnic we have of it, even while it lasts! and into what great waters, not to be crossed by any swimmer, God's pale Prætorian throws us over in the end!

We live the time that a match flickers; we pop the cork of a ginger-beer bottle, and

the earthquake swallows us on the instant. Is it not odd, is it not incongruous, is it not, in the highest sense of human speech, incredible, that we should think so highly of the ginger-beer, and regard so little the devouring earthquake? The love of Life and the fear of Death are two famous phrases that grow harder to understand the more we think about them. It is a well-known fact that an immense proportion of boat accidents would never happen if people held the sheet in their hands instead of making it fast; and yet, unless it be some martinet of a professional mariner, or some landsman with shattered nerves, every one of God's creatures makes it fast. A strange instance of man's unconcern and brazen boldness in the face of death!

We confound ourselves with metaphysical phrases, which we import into daily talk with noble inappropriateness. We have no idea of what death is, apart from its circumstances and some of its consequences to others; and although we have some experience of living, there is not a man on earth who has flown so high into abstraction as to have any practical guess at the meaning of

the word *life*. All literature, from Job and Omar Khayyám to Thomas Carlyle or Walt Whitman, is but an attempt to look upon the human state with such largeness of view as shall enable us to rise from the consideration of living to the Definition of Life. And our sages give us about the best satisfaction in their power when they say that it is a vapour, or a show, or made out of the same stuff with dreams. Philosophy, in its more rigid sense, has been at the same work for ages; and after a myriad bald heads have wagged over the problem, and piles of words have been heaped one upon another into dry and cloudy volumes without end, philosophy has the honor of laying before us, with modest pride, her contribution towards the subject: that life is a Permanent Possibility of Sensation. Truly a fine result! A man may very well love beef, or hunting, or a woman; but surely, surely, not a Permanent Possibility of Sensation! He may be afraid of a precipice, or a dentist, or a large enemy with a club, or even an undertaker's man; but not certainly of abstract death. We may trick with the word life in its dozen senses until we are weary of tricking; we

may argue in terms of all the philosophies on earth, but one fact remains true throughout— that we do not love life, in the sense that we are greatly preoccupied about its conservation; that we do not, properly speaking, love life at all, but living. Into the views of the least careful there will enter some degree of providence; no man's eyes are fixed entirely on the passing hour; but although we have some anticipation of good health, good weather, wine, active employment, love, and self-approval, the sum of these anticipations does not amount to anything like a general view of life's possibilities and issues; nor are those who cherish them most vividly at all the most scrupulous of their personal safety. To be deeply interested in the accidents of our existence, to enjoy keenly the mixed texture of human experience, rather leads a man to disregard precautions, and risk his neck against a straw. For surely the love of living is stronger in an Alpine climber roping over a peril, or a hunter riding merrily at a stiff fence, than in a creature who lives upon a diet and walks a measured distance in the interest of his constitution.

There is a great deal of very vile nonsense talked upon both sides of the matter: tearing divines reducing life to the dimensions of a mere funeral procession, so short as to be hardly decent; and melancholy unbelievers yearning for the tomb as if it were a world too far away. Both sides must feel a little ashamed of their performances now and again when they draw in their chairs to dinner. Indeed, a good meal and a bottle of wine is an answer to most standard works upon the question. When a man's heart warms to his viands, he forgets a great deal of sophistry, and soars into a rosy zone of contemplation. Death may be knocking at the door, like the Commander's statue; we have something else in hand, thank God, and let him knock. Passing-bells are ringing all the world over. All the world over, and every hour, some one is parting company with all his aches and ecstasies. For us also the trap is laid. But we are so fond of life that we have no leisure to entertain the terror of death. It is a honeymoon with us all through, and none of the longest. Small blame to us if we give our whole hearts to this glowing bride of ours, to the appetites,

to honour, to the hungry curiosity of the mind, to the pleasure of the eyes in nature, and the pride of our own nimble bodies.

We all of us appreciate the sensations; but as for caring about the Permanence of the Possibility, a man's head is generally very bald, and his senses very dull, before he comes to that. Whether we regard life as a lane leading to a dead wall — a mere bag's end, as the French say — or whether we think of it as a vestibule or gymnasium where we wait our turn and prepare our faculties for some more noble destiny; whether we thunder in a pulpit, or pule in little atheistic poetry-books, about its vanity and brevity; whether we look justly for years of health and vigour, or are about to mount into a bath-chair, as a step towards the hearse; in each and all of these views and situations there is but one conclusion possible: that a man should stop his ears against paralyzing terror, and run the race that is set before him with a single mind. No one surely could have recoiled with more heartache and terror from the thought of death than our respected lexicographer; and yet we know how little it affected his con-

duct, how wisely and boldly he walked, and in what a fresh and lively vein he spoke of life. Already an old man, he ventured on his Highland tour: and his heart, bound with triple brass, did not recoil before twenty-seven individual cups of tea. As courage and intelligence are the two qualities best worth a good man's cultivation, so it is the first part of intelligence to recognize our precarious estate in life, and the first part of courage to be not at all abashed before the fact. A frank and somewhat headlong carriage, not looking too anxiously before, not dallying in maudlin regret over the past, stamps the man who is well armoured for this world.

And not only well armoured for himself, but a good friend and a good citizen to boot. We do not go to cowards for tender dealing; there is nothing so cruel as panic; the man who has least fear for his own carcass, has most time to consider others. That eminent chemist who took his walks abroad in tin shoes, and subsisted wholly upon tepid milk, had all his work cut out for him in considerate dealings with his own digestion. So soon as prudence has begun to grow up in

the brain, like a dismal fungus, it finds its first expression in a paralysis of generous acts. The victim begins to shrink spiritually; he develops a fancy for parlours with a regulated temperature, and takes his morality on the principle of tin shoes and tepid milk. The care of one important body or soul becomes so engrossing that all the noises of the outer world begin to come thin and faint into the parlour with the regulated temperature; and the tin shoes go equably forward over blood and rain. To be over-wise is to ossify; and the scruple-monger ends by standing stock-still. Now the man who has his heart on his sleeve, and a good whirling weather-cock of a brain, who reckons his life as a thing to be dashingly used and cheerfully hazarded, makes a very different acquaintance of the world, keeps all his pulses going true and fast, and gathers impetus as he runs, until, if he be running towards anything better than wildfire, he may shoot up and become a constellation in the end. Lord look after his health, Lord have a care of his soul, says he; and he has at the key of the position, and swashes through incongruity and peril

towards his aim. Death is on all sides of him with pointed batteries, as he is on all sides of all of us; unfortunate surprises gird him round; mim-mouthed friends and relations hold up their hands in quite a little elegiacal synod about his path: and what cares he for all this? Being a true lover of living, a fellow with something pushing and spontaneous in his inside, he must, like any other soldier, in any other stirring, deadly warfare, push on at his best pace until he touch the goal. "A peerage or Westminster Abbey!" cried Nelson, in his bright, boyish, heroic manner. These are great incentives; not for any of these, but for the plain satisfaction of living, of being about their business in some sort or other, do the brave, serviceable men of every nation tread down the nettle danger, and pass flyingly over all the stumbling-blocks of prudence. Think of the heroism of Johnson, think of that superb indifference to mortal limitation that set him upon his dictionary, and carried him through triumphantly until the end! Who, if he were wisely considerate of things at large, would ever embark upon any work much more considerable than a half-penny post-card?

Who would project a serial novel, after Thackeray and Dickens had each fallen in mid-course? Who could find heart to begin to live, if he dallied with the consideration of death?

And, after all, what sorry and pitiful quibbling all this is! To forego all the issues of living in a parlour with a regulated temperature — as if that were not to die a hundred times over, and for ten years at a stretch! As if it were not to die in one's own lifetime, and without even the sad immunities of death! As if it were not to die, and yet be the patient spectators of our own pitiable change! The Permanent Possibility is preserved, but the sensations carefully held at arm's length, as if one kept a photographic plate in a dark chamber. It is better to lose health like a spendthrift than to waste it like a miser. It is better to live and be done with it, than to die daily in the sick-room. By all means begin your folio; even if the doctor does not give you a year, even if he hesitates about a month, make one brave push and see what can be accomplished in a week. It is not only in finished undertakings that we ought to

honour useful labour. A spirit goes out of the man who means execution which outlives the most untimely ending. All who have meant good work with their whole hearts, have done good work, although they may die before they have the time to sign it. Every heart that has beat strong and cheerfully has left a hopeful impulse behind it in the world, and bettered the tradition of mankind. And even if death catch people, like an open pitfall, and in mid-career, laying out vast projects, and planning monstrous foundations, flushed with hope, and their mouths full of boastful language, they should be at once tripped up and silenced: is there not something brave and spirited in such a termination? and does not life go down with a better grace, foaming in full body over a precipice, than miserably straggling to an end in sandy deltas? When the Greeks made their fine saying that those whom the gods love die young, I cannot help believing they had this sort of death also in their eye. For surely, at whatever age it overtake the man, this is to die young. Death has not been suffered to take so much as an illusion from his heart. In the hot-fit of

life, a-tiptoe on the highest point of being, he passes at a bound on to the other side. The noise of the mallet and chisel is scarcely quenched, the trumpets are hardly done blowing, when, trailing with him clouds of glory, this happy-starred, full-blooded spirit shoots into the spiritual land.

A LATE *lark twitters from the quiet skies*
And from the west,
Where the sun, his day's work ended,
Lingers as in content,
There falls on the old, gray city
An influence luminous and serene,
A shining peace.

The smoke ascends
In a rosy-and-golden haze. The spires
Shine, and are changed. In the valley
Shadows rise. The lark sings on. The sun,
Closing his benediction,
Sinks, and the darkening air
Thrills with a sense of the triumphing night—
Night, with her train of stars
And her great gift of sleep.

So be my passing!
My task accomplished and the long day done,
My wages taken, and in my heart
Some late lark singing,
Let me be gathered to the quiet west,
The sundown splendid and serene,
Death.

WILLIAM ERNEST HENLEY.

The Bibelot

THIS essay, "a study in spiritual history," is here given with the approval of Miss Macleod, and has a Foreword now appearing for the first time. It was written in cordial response to our request asking permission to include the article in these pages, and may be taken to express the author's latest views concerning a movement in literature which from now onward must be reckoned with as a vital force.

What then is the Celtic Movement and what its object? "So far as it is a fact it is the expression of 'a freshly inspired spiritual and artistic energy,' coloured by racial temperament, and drawing its inspiration from the 'usufruct of an ancient and beautiful treasure of national tradition.' Its aim is, or should be, to pour that treasure into the common treasury of English literature, informed with all the qualities of the Celtic nature, and so enrich by its infusion the common life of the Britannic race."

"That Miss Macleod's own work conforms to the ideals she has thus set forth," that "she sees the whole world transparent

(*as it were*) *by the contained light of the Unseen*" [1] *no one will doubt who reads what she has entitled with such simple brevity*, Celtic.

The editor of The Bibelot *cannot but congratulate himself and his* clientèle *that at the same time he is bringing out* From the Hills of Dream *he is also permitted to offer a specimen of Fiona Macleod's prose, charged with the same high imaginative qualities which distinguish and set apart from all other writers of to-day the author of* The Rune of the Passion of Woman.

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1 *See* The Academy, *26 May, 1900, pages 443, 444, for an able review of* The Divine Adventure; Iona; By Sundown Shores; Studies in Spiritual History.

CELTIC:
A Study in
SPIRITUAL HISTORY.

FOREWORD

THE short essay which follows appeared first in The Contemporary Review, *and a few months later in the volume entitled* The Divine Adventure: Iona: and other Studies in Spiritual History: *and was the signal for much comment. But for the moment I would recur only to the aspect it wore for many in that country for whose more eager spirits it was above all intended. . . Ireland being to-day not only the true home of lost causes but a nursery of the heroic powers and influences that go forth to conquer and die: and of the passionate and evil powers and influences which rise into fatal or paralysing miasmas.*

Although in Ireland, then, this essay towards a worthy peace, where peace may be; and towards a compromise, in nothing ignoble, for the sake of a union in a noble destiny; was welcomed by many — there were others, and among them one or two of those deservedly held in highest honour, who protested strongly. I am very far from ill will to those who, no doubt in part through a hurried habit of mind, sought by somewhat intemperate means to discredit

the plea. I believe . . . I would say I know, so sure am I . . . . that these had at heart the one thought of Ireland, the one passion, which is indeed the solitary hope of the Gael, the passion of nationality; and having this thought and this passion, considered little or for the time ignored that reticence or grave courtesy cherished by minds less sick with hope deferred, less desperate with defeated dreams. But in controversy nothing else was revealed than that an eager enthusiasm can sometimes lead to confused thought and hasty speech, and (it may well be) that the writer of "Celtic" had unwittingly failed to be explicit on the one fundamental and essential factor in Gaelic union, in the continued life and development of the Gael . . . the proud and unyielding preservation of nationality.

The aim of this essay was to help towards a twofold reconciliation: not a reconciliation between "inveterate and irreconcilable foes" (which is but the rhetoric of those fevered with an epileptic nationalism), but a reconciliation such as may be persuaded between two persons,

each with divergent individual aims and ideals, yet able to unite with decency and courtesy in a league for the common good, the commonweal. It seemed, and seems, to the writer that common sense (there is no Celtic word for it) makes clear that an absolute irreconcilability is simply a cul-de-sac, down which baffled dreams and hopes and faiths come at last upon a blank wall. Strength is built up out of forfeiture as well as of steadfastness, and the man or woman, cause or race wins, which on occasion can relinquish or forbear. Merely to be irreconcilable is merely to prefer the blank wall to the open road.

But when that is said, it does not follow that there are no subjects, no ideals, no aims which stand apart from this debatable ground of reconciliation. On the contrary, I believed, and believe, that there are subjects, ideals, and aims whose whole hope lies in an unswerving steadfastness.

The keynote of "Celtic" is in the sentence, "we have of late heard so much of Celtic beauty and Celtic emotion that we would do well to stand in more surety as to what we mean and what we do not mean."

This necessarily merely indicative, merely suggestive paper, would perhaps better have been reprinted without foreword, but for an amendment on an important point.

I generalised too vaguely, I find, when I wrote "What is a Celtic writer?" . . . . It is obvious that if one would write English literature, one must write in English and in the English tradition."

Of course I meant nothing so narrow in claim, so foreign to my conviction, as that one must "be English." There is no 'must,' in the Academic sense, in literature: the most vivid and original literature has in truth ever been an ignoring or overriding of the strong word of the weak.

Only I can see how some — I am glad to know the few, not the many — misread this sentence. For that, I welcome this opportunity to be more explicit. There is no need here to recur to the consideration of the exact significance that should attach to the designation, a 'Celtic writer.' To consider those only, then, who write in English, I would add to my statement that if one would write English literature one must write in English and in the English tradi-

tion, the rider that the English language is not the exclusive property of that section of our complex race which is distinctively English, the English nation — any more than it is the exclusive property of the Scots, who speak it, or of the Australians; or of the Canadians; or of the vast and numerically superior American nation. The language is common to all, and is not an insular dominion so to speak, outside of which are allied variations. A patriotic Belgian or Swiss is not a Frenchman though his native language be French: and in like manner our kinsfolk of the United States are not English because they too share in the heritage shaped by the genius, moulded by the life and thought, and transmitted by the living spirit of the common essential stock — now as likely to be revealed in Massachusetts as in Yorkshire, in Toronto as in Edinburgh, in Sydney or Melbourne or Washington, as in Liverpool, Manchester, or London. An American writes in his native language when he writes in English: so does a Scot, now: so does a Canadian, an Australian, a New Zealander. Therefore the literature of

the Australians, the Scots, the Irish, the Americans must be in English. In a word, it is not the language that determines, but the thought behind the language — the colour and form of distinctive life. It is not the language that compels genius, but genius that compels the language.

Again, literature has laws as inevitable as the laws which mould and determine the destiny of nations. These can be evaded by decay and death: they cannot be overridden. Every literature has its tradition of excellence . . . that is, the sum of what within its own limits can be achieved in beauty and power and aptitude. This tradition of excellence is what we call the central stream. Of course if one prefer the tributary, the backwater, the offshoot, there is no reason why one should not be well content within the chosen course. To many it seems, for many it is, the better way; as the backwater for the shy kingfisher, the offshoot or tributary for the solitary heron. But one must not choose the backwater and declare that it is the main stream, or have the little tributary say that though it travels on the great flow it is not part of the river.

That is what I meant when I said that if one would write English literature one must write in English and in the English tradition. To say that was not to bid the Gael cease to be Gaelic, any more than it would imply that the American should cease to be American. On the contrary, I do most strenuously believe that the sole life of the least value in Anglo-Celtic literature (as in American literature) is in the preservation of the distinct racial genius, temper, colour and contour. If the poetry of the two foremost Irish poets of to-day did not conform to the laws and traditions, of English poetry — since Mr. Yeats and Mr. George Russell write in their native language, English, the language to which they were born and in which alone they can express themselves — it might be very interesting 'Celtic' or any other experimental verse, but it would not be English poetry. The beauty they breathe into their instrument is of themselves; is individual certainly, and in spirit and atmosphere is distinctively Gaelic rather than distinctively English. But the instrument is English: and to summon beauty through it, and to

give the phantom a body and spirit of excellence, one must follow in the footsteps of the master-musicians, recognising the same limitations, observing the same needs, fulfilling the like rigorous obligations of mastery.

Since we have to write in English, we must accept the burthen and responsibility. If a Cretan write in the Cretan dialect, he can be estimated by those who know Cretan: but if he is ambitious to have his irregular measures and corrupt speech called Greek poetry he must write in Greek and conform to the Greek tradition, to the laws and limitations of the Greek genius. The Englishman, the Scot, the Irishman, the American each, if he would write English literature, has of necessity to do likewise.

In a very true sense, therefore, there can be an Irish literature, a Scottish literature, an Anglo-Gaelic literature, as well as an English literature: but in the wider sense it is all English literature — with, as may be, an Irish spirit and an Irish ideal and Irish colour, or with a Highland spirit and a Highland ideal and Highland colour, or with a Welsh spirit and a Welsh

ideal and Welsh colour — as Mr. Thomas Hardy's writings are English literature, with an English spirit and an English ideal and English colour.

It is the desire and faith of the Irish nation to make or mould anew a literature as distinctively its own as the English nation has a literature that is distinctively its own: and to do this, in Ireland or the like in Scotland, is possible only by the cultivation, the preservation at all hazards, of the national spirit, of the national idiosyncrasy, the national ideals. I would see our peoples reconciled, believing that in reconciliation lie the elements of strength and advance, of noble growth and conquering influence: but I would not have reconciliation at any price, and would rather we should dwell isolate and hostile than purchase peace at the cost of relinquishment of certain things more precious than all prosperities and triumphs. The law of love is the nobler way, but there is also a divine law of hate. I do not advocate, and have never advocated, a reconciliation on any terms. I am not English, and have not the English mind or

the English temper and in many things do not share the English ideals; and to possess these would mean to relinquish my own heritage. But why should I be irreconcilably hostile to that mind and that temper and those ideals: why should I not do my utmost to understand, sympathise, fall into line with them so far as may be, since we have all a common bond and a common destiny?

To that mind and that temper and those ideals do we not owe some of the noblest achievements of the human race, some of the lordliest conquests over the instincts and forces of barbarism, some of the loveliest and most deathless things of the spirit and the imagination?

As for the Gaelic remnant (and none can pretend that this means Scotland and Ireland, but only a portion of Scotland and only a divided Ireland) I am ever but the more convinced that the dream of an outward independence as a separate entity is a perilous illusion — not because it is impracticable, for that alone is a fascination to us, but because it does not, cannot alas, reveal those dominant elements which alone

can shape and control dreams become actualities. Another and greater independence is within our reach, is ours, to preserve and ennoble.

Strange reversals, strange fulfilments may lie on the lap of the gods, but we have no knowledge of these, and hear neither the high laughter nor the far voices. But we front a possible because a spiritual destiny greater than the height of imperial fortunes, and have that which may send our voices further than the trumpets of east and west. Through ages of slow westering, till now we face the sundown seas, we have learned in continual vicissitude that there are secret ways whereon armies cannot march. And this has been given to us, a more ardent longing, a more rapt passion in the things of outward beauty and in the things of spiritual beauty. Nor it seems to me is there any sadness, or only the serene sadness of a great day's end, that, to others, we reveal in our best the genius of a race whose farewell is in a tragic lighting of torches of beauty around its grave.

F. M.

Sept., 1901.

CELTIC

A WRITER might well be proud to be identified with a movement that is primarily spiritual and eager, a movement of quickened artistic life. I for one care less to be identified with any literary movement avowedly partisan. That is not the deliberate view of literature, which carries with it the heat and confused passions of the many. It is not the deliberate view, which confers passions that are fugitive upon that troubled Beauty which knows only a continual excellence. It is not the deliberate view, which would impose the penury of distracted dreams and desires upon those who go up to the treasure house and to white palaces.

But I am somewhat tired of an epithet that, in a certain association, is become jejune, through use and misuse. It has grown familiar wrongly; is often a term of praise or disdain, in each inept; is applied without moderation; and so now is sometimes unwelcome even when there is none other so apt and right.

The 'Celtic Movement,' in the first place, is not as so often confusedly stated an arbitrary effort to reconstruct the past; though

it is, in part, an effort to discover the past. For myself (as one imputed to this 'movement') I would say that I do not seek to reproduce ancient Celtic presentments of tragic beauty and tragic fate, but do seek in nature and in life, and in the swimming thought of timeless imagination, for the kind of beauty that the old Celtic poets discovered and uttered. There were poets and myth-makers in those days; and to-day we may be sure that a new Mythus is being woven, though we may no longer humanise and euhemerise the forces of Nature and her silent and secret processes; for the mythopœic faculty is not only a primitive instinct but a spiritual need.

I do not suppose our Celtic ancestors — for all their high civilisation and development, so much beyond what obtained among the Teutonic peoples at the same date — theorised about their narrative art; but from what we know of their literature, from the most ancient bardic chants to the *sgéul* of to-day, we cannot fail to see that the instinctive ideal was to represent beautiful life. It is an ideal that has lain below the spiritual passion of all great art in every period.

Phidias knew it when he culled a white beauty from the many Athenian youth, and Leonardo when he discerned the inexplicable in woman's beauty and painted Moña Lisa, and Palestrina when from the sound in the pines and the voice of the wind in solitudes and the songs of labourers at sundown he wove a solemn music for cathedral aisles. With instinct, the old Celtic poets and romancists knew it: there are no Breton ballads, nor Cymric mabinogion nor Gaelic sgéulan, which deal ignobly with petty life. All the evil passions may obtain there, but but they move against a spiritual background of pathetic wonder, of tragic beauty and tragic fate.

All art should represent beautiful life. If we want a vision of life that is not beautiful, we can have it otherwise: a multitude can depict the ignoble; the lens can replicate the usual.

It should be needless to add that our vision of the beautiful must be deep and wide and virile, as well as high and ideal. When we say that art should represent beautiful life, we do not say that it should represent only the beautiful in life, which would be to

ignore the roots and the soil and the vivid sap, and account the blossom only. The vision of beautiful life is the vision of life seen not in impossible unrelief, but in possible relief: of harmonious unity in design as well as in colour. To say that art should represent beautiful life is merely to give formal expression to the one passionate instinct in every poet and painter and musician, in every artist. There is no 'art' saved by a moral purpose, though all true art is spiritually informed; and I know none, with pen or brush, with chisel or score, which, ignobly depicting the ignoble, survives in excellence.

In this, one cannot well go astray. Nor do I seek an unreal Ideal. In the kingdom of the imagination, says one of our forgotten mystics, the ideal must ever be faithful to the general laws of nature; elsewhere adding a truth as immanent: 'Man is not alone: the Angel of the Presence of the Infinite is with him.' I do not, with Blake, look upon our world as though it were at best a basis for transcendental vision, while in itself 'a hindrance and a mistake,' but rather, as a wiser has said, to an Earth spiritualised, not

a Heaven naturalised. With him, too, I would say, 'I have a fondness for the earth, and rather a Phrygian way of regarding it, despite a deeper yearning to see its glades receding into the Gardens of Heaven.'

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We cannot but regret when any word, that has peculiar associations of beauty or interest, or in which some distinction obtains, is lightly bandied. Its merit is then in convenience of signal rather than in its own significance. It is easy to recall some of these unfortunates; as our Scottish word 'gloaming,' that is so beautiful, and is now, alas, to be used rarely and with heed; as 'haunting,' with its implicit kinship with all mysteries of shadow, and its present low estate; as 'melody,' that has an outworn air, though it has three secrets of beauty; as others, that one or two use with inevitableness, and a small number deftly, till the journal has it, and it is come into desuetude.

We have of late heard so much of Celtic beauty and Celtic emotion that we would do well to stand in more surety as to what we mean and what we do not mean.

I do not myself know any beauty that is of art to excel that bequeathed to us by Greece. The marble has outlasted broken dynasties and lost empires: the word is to-day fresh as with dews of dawn. But through the heart I travel into another land. Through the heart, I go to lost gardens, to mossed fountains, to groves where is no white beauty of still statue, but only the beauty of an old forgotten day remembered with quickened pulse and desired with I know not what of longing and weariness.

Is it remembrance, I wonder often, that makes many of us of the Celtic peoples turn to our own past with a longing so great, a love perfected through forgotten tribulations and familiar desire of the things we know to be impossible but so fair? Or do we but desire in memory what all primitive races had, and confuse our dreams with those which have no peace because they are immortal?

If one can think with surety but a little way back into the past, one can divine through both the heart and the mind. I do not think that our broken people had no other memories and traditions than other early peoples had. I believe they stood more

near to ancient forgotten founts of wisdom than others stood: I believe that they are the offspring of a race who were in a more close communion with the secret powers of the world we know and the secret powers of the world we do not know than were any other people. I think their ancient writings show it, their ancient legends, their subtle and strangely spiritual mythology. I believe that, in the east, they lit the primitive genius of their race at unknown and mysterious fires; that, in the ages, they have not wholly forgotten the ancestral secret; that, in the west, they may yet turn from the grey wave that they see, and the grey wave of time that they do not see, and again, upon new altars, commit that primeval fire.

But to believe is one thing, to affirm is another. Those of us who believe thus have no warrant to show. It may well be that we do but create an image made after the desire and faith of the heart.

It is not the occasion to speak of what I do believe the peculiar and excelling beauty of the Celtic genius and Celtic literature to be; how deep its wellsprings, how full of strange new beauty to us who come upon it

that is so old and remote. What I have just written will disclose that wherever else I may desire to worship, there is one beauty that has to me the light of home upon it; that there is one beauty from which, above all others now, I hope for a new revelation; that there is a love, there is a passion, there is a romance, which to me calls more suddenly and searchingly than any other ancient love or ancient passion or ancient romance.

But having said this, I am the more free to speak what I have in view. Let me say at once, then, that I am not a great believer 'in movements,' and still less in 'renascences;' to be more exact, I hold myself in a suspicion towards these terms; for often, in the one, what we look for is not implicit, and in the other, we are apt rather to find the aside and external.

So far as I understand the 'Celtic Movement,' it is a natural outcome, the natural expression of a freshly inspired spiritual and artistic energy. That this expression is coloured by racial temperament is its distinction; that it is controlled to novel usage is its opportunity. When we look for its source we find it in the usufruct of an

ancient and beautiful treasure of national tradition. One may the more aptly speak thus collectively of a mythology and a literature, and a vast and wonderful legendary folklore, since to us, now, it is in great part hidden behind veils of an all but forgotten tongue and of a system of life and customs, ideals and thought, that no longer obtains.

I am unable, however, to see that it has sustenance in elements of revolt. A new movement should not be a revolt, but a sortie to carry a fresh position. When one hears, as one does every now and then, that the Celtic movement is a revolt against the tyranny of the English tradition, one can but smile; as though a plaster-cast, that is of to-day, were to revolt against the Venus of Milo or the Winged Victory, that is of no day. If a movement has any inherent force, it will not destroy itself in forlorn hopes, but will fall into line, and so achieve where alone the desired success can be achieved.

There is no racial road to beauty, nor to any excellence. Genius, which leads thither, beckons neither to tribe nor clan, neither to school nor movement, but only to one soul here and to another there; so that the

Icelander hears and speaks in Saga, and the brown Malay hears and carves delicately in ivory; and the men in Europe, from the Serb and the Finn to the Basque and the Breton, hear, and each in his kind answers; and what the Englishman says in song and romance and the deep utterance of his complex life, his mountain-kindred say in mabinogi or sgéul.

Even in those characteristics which distinguish Celtic literature — intimate natural vision; a swift emotion that is sometimes a spiritual ecstasy, but sometimes is also a mere intoxication of the senses; a peculiar sensitiveness to the beauty of what is remote and solitary; a rapt pleasure in what is ancient and in the contemplation of what holds an inevitable melancholy; a visionary passion for beauty, which is of the immortal things, beyond the temporal beauty of what is mutable and mortal — even in these characteristics it does not stand alone, and perhaps not pre-eminent. There is a beauty in the Homeric Hymns that I do not find in the most beautiful of Celtic chants; none could cull from the gardens of the Gael what in the Greek anthology has been gathered

out of time to be everlasting; not even the love and passion of the stories of the Celtic mythology surpass the love and passion of the stories of the Hellenic mythology. The romance that of old flowered among the Gaelic hills flowered also in English meads, by Danish shores, amid Teuton woods and plains. I think Catullus sang more excellently than Bailê Honeymouth, and that Theocritus loved nature not less than Oisin, and that the ancient makers of the Kalevala were as much children of the wind and wave and the intimate natural world as were the makers of the ancient heroic chronicles of the Gael.

There is no law set upon beauty. It has no geography. It is an open land. And if, of those who enter there, peradventure any comes again, he is welcome for what he brings; nor do we demand if he be dark or fair, Latin or Teuton or Celt, or say of him that his tidings are lovelier or the less lovely because he was born in the shadow of Gaelic hills or nurtured by Celtic shores.

It is well that each should learn the mother-song of his land at the cradle-place of his birth. It is well that the people of

the isles should love the isles above all else. and the people of the mountains love the mountains above all else, and the people of the plains love the plains above all else. But it is not well that because of the whistling of the wind in the heather one should imagine that nowhere else does the wind suddenly stir the reeds and the grasses in its incalculable hour.

When I hear that a new writer is of the Celtic school, I am left in some uncertainty, for I know of many Anglo-Celtic writers but of no 'school,' or what present elements would inform a school. What is a Celtic writer? If the word has any exact acceptance, it must denote an Irish or a Scottish Gael, a Cymric or Breton Celt, who writes in the language of his race. It is obvious that if one would write English literature, one must write in English and in the English tradition.

When I hear, therefore, of this or that writer as a Celtic writer, I wonder if the term is not apt to be misleading. An English writer is meant, who in person happens to be an Irish Gael, or Highland, or Welsh.

I have already suggested what other mis-

use of the word obtains: Celtic emotion, Celtic love of nature, Celtic visionariness. That, as admitted, there is in the Celtic peoples an emotionalism peculiar in kind and perhaps in intensity, is not to be denied; that a love of nature is characteristic is true, but differing only, if at all, in certain intimacies of approach; that visionariness is relatively so common as to be typical, is obvious. But there is English emotion, English love of nature, English visionariness, as there is Dutch, or French, or German, or Russian, or Hindu. There is no nationality in these things save in the accident of contour and colour. At a hundred yards a forest is seen to consist of ash and lime, of elms, beeches, oaks, hornbeams; but a mile away it is, simply, a forest.

I do not know any Celtic visionary so rapt and absolute as the Londoner William Blake, or the Scandinavian Swedenborg, or the Flemish Ruysbroeck; or any Celtic poet of nature to surpass the Englishman Keats; nor do I think even religious ecstacy is more seen in Ireland than in Italy.

Nothing but harm is done by a protestation that cannot persuade deliberate acceptance.

When I hear that 'only a Celt' could have written this or that passage of emotion or description, I am become impatient of these parrot-cries, for I remember that if all Celtic literature were to disappear, the world would not be so impoverished as by the loss of English literature, or French literature, or that of Rome or of Greece.

But above all else it is time that a prevalent pseudo-nationalism should be dissuaded. I am proud to be a Highlander, but I would not side with those who would 'set the heather on fire.' If I were Irish, I would be proud, but I would not lower my pride by marrying it to a ceaseless ill-will, an irreconcilable hate, for there can be a nobler pride in unvanquished acquiescence than in revolt. I would be proud if I were Welsh, but I would not refuse to learn English, or to mix with English as equals. And proud as I might be to be Highland or Scottish or Irish or Welsh or English, I would be more proud to be British — for, there at last, we have a bond to unite us all, and to give us space for every ideal, whether communal or individual, whether national or spiritual.

As for literature, there is, for us all, only

English literature. All else is provincial or dialectic.

But gladly I for one am willing to be designated Celtic, if the word signify no more than that one is an English writer who by birth, inheritance, and temperament has an outlook not distinctively English, with some memories and traditions and ideals not shared in by one's countrymen of the South, with a racial instinct that informs what one writes, and, for the rest, a common heritage.

The Celtic element in our national life has a vital and great part to play. We have a most noble ideal if we will but accept it. And that is, not to perpetuate feuds, not to try to win back what is gone away upon the wind, not to repay ignorance with scorn, or dulness with contempt, or past wrongs with present hatred, but so to live, so to pray, so to hope, so to work, so to achieve, that we, what is left of the Celtic races, of the Celtic genius, may permeate the greater race of which we are a vital part, so that with this Celtic emotion, Celtic love of beauty, and Celtic spirituality a nation greater than any the world has seen may issue, a nation refined and strengthened by the wise relin-

quishings and steadfast ideals of Celt and Saxon, united in a common fatherland, and in singleness of pride and faith.

As I have said, I am not concerned here with what I think the Celtic genius has done for the world, and for English literature in particular, and above all for us of to-day and to-morrow; nor can I dwell upon what of beautiful and mysterious and wonderful it discloses, or upon its bitter-sweet charm. But of a truth, the inward sense and significance of the 'Celtic Movement' is, as has been well said, in the opening of a fountain of legends, and, as scholars aver, a more abundant fountain than any in Europe, the great fountain of Gaelic legends. 'None can measure of how great importance it may be to coming times, for every new fountain of legends is a new intoxication for the imagination of the world. It comes at a time when the imagination of the world is as ready, as it was at the coming of the tales of Arthur and of the Grail, for a new intoxication. The arts have become religious, and must, as religious thought has always done, utter themselves through legends; and the Gaelic legends have so much of a new beauty that

they may well give the opening century its most memorable symbols.'

Perhaps the most significant sentence in M. Renan's remarkable study of the Poetry of the Celtic Races is that where he speaks of the Celtic Race as having worn itself out in mistaking dreams for realities. I am not certain that this is true, but it holds so great a part of truth that it should make us think upon how we stand.

I think our people have most truly loved their land, and their country, and their songs, and their ancient traditions, and that the word of bitterest savour is that sad word exile. But it is also true that in that love we love vaguely another land, a rainbow-land, and that our most desired country is not the real Ireland, the real Scotland, the real Brittany, but the vague Land of Youth, the shadowy Land of Heart's Desire. And it is also true, that deep in the songs we love above all other songs is a lamentation for what is gone away from the world, rather than merely from us as a people; or a sighing of longing for what the heart desires but no mortal destiny requites. And true, too, that no tradition from of old is so compell-

ing as the compelling tradition that is from within; and that the long sorrow of our exile is in part because we ourselves have driven from us that company of hopes and dreams away which were once realities, but are now among beautiful idle words.

In a word, we dwell overmuch among desired illusions. These are as fair as the rainbow, and as intimate in promise, when, like the rainbow, they are the spiritual reflection of certainties; but they are worthless as the rainbow-gold with which the Shee deceive the unwary, when what is the phantom of a spiritual desire is taken to be the reality of material fact.

And I think that we should be on guard against any abuse of, that we should consider this other side of, our dreams and ideals, wherein awaits weakness as well as abides strength. It is not ill to dream, in a day when there are too few who will withdraw from a continual business, a day when there are fewer dreams. But we shall not greatly gain if we dream only of beautiful abstractions, and not also of actual or imaginative realities and possibilities. In a Highland cottage I heard some time ago a

man singing a lament for 'Tearlach Og Aluinn,' Bonnie Prince Charlie; and when he ceased tears were on the face of each that was there, and in his own throat a sob. I asked him, later, was his heart really so full of the Prionnsa Ban, but he told me that it was not him he was thinking of, but of all the dead men and women of Scotland who had died for his sake, and of Scotland itself, and of the old days that could not come again. I did not ask what old days, for I knew that in his heart he lamented his own dead hopes and dreams, and that the prince was but the image of his lost youth, and that the world was old and grey because of his own weariness and his own grief.

Sometimes I fear that we who as a people do so habitually companion ourselves with dreams may fall into that abyss where the realities are become shadows, and shadows alone live and move. And then I remember that dreamers and visionaries are few; that we are no such people; that no such people has ever been; and that of all idle weaving of sand and foam none is more idle than this, the strange instinctive dread of the multitude, that the few whose minds

and imaginations dwell among noble memories and immortal desires shall supersede the many who are content with lesser memories and ignoble desires.

The Bibelot

"All men may know him now, and dullards blind
Into the secrets of his soul may see;
And all shall love — but, Steadfast Greatheart, we,
We knew thee when the wide world did thee wrong."

AMONG *contemporary tributes of love and respect laid upon the grave of William Makepeace Thackeray there are at least three of enduring excellence. It was inevitable that much mediocre verse and prose should be written on such an occasion; the best and worst of it having dropped out of sight*[1] *the three appreciations we here reprint "like new-bathed stars emerge," shining with a renewed radiance like the increasing fame of him they celebrate — "Whose light doth trample on our days."*

It goes almost without saying that In Memoriam *is well known to every reader of either great novelist — Dickens or Thack-*

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1 See Anecdote Biographies of Thackeray and Dickens edited by R. H. Stoddard. (*Bric-a-Brac Series, New York, 1874*); *the various introductory chapters by Mrs. Richmond Ritchie to the thirteen volumes of* Thackeray's Complete Works, (*London and New York, 1899*); *and* Letters to Dead Authors *by Andrew Lang* (*London, 1886*). *This last we much regret lack of space compels us to omit.*

eray; so too is Dr. John Brown's article fairly familiar to readers of Horæ Subsecivæ.[2] *In the sonorous elegiacs of Dr. Parsons we find summed up all that was the "true Thackeray—a man who would not lie," by a poet of the highest order, whose lyric gifts are far less admired than their surpassing merit demands.*[3] *This poem we believe to be one of the noblest expressions of personal feeling extant. Its austerity ensures its perpetuity; it will remain when much else has fallen "into the portion of weeds and outworn faces."*

"And if there be no meeting past the grave,
If all is darkness, silence, yet 'tis rest.
Be not afraid, ye waiting hearts that weep,
For God still giveth His beloved sleep.
And if an endless sleep He wills—so best!"

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2 *A new edition well worth having, on thin but excellent paper, has recently been issued by A. & C. Black, (Sq 16mo. 3 vols. flexible cloth, London, 1900).*

3 Poems by Thomas William Parsons, (*16mo. Boston, 1893*). *The poem on Thackeray first appeared in The Boston Advertiser January 13th, 1864, unsigned, and our reprint has been collated with the original. It is not included in the 1893 volume.*

FOR JANUARY:
LONDON VOLUNTARIES,
By
WILLIAM ERNEST HENLEY.

In Praise of Thackeray.

O gentler Censor of our age,
Prime master of our ampler tongue,
Whose word of wit and generous page
Were never wroth except with wrong.
Fielding without the manner's dross,
Scott with a spirit's larger room,
What prelate deems thy grave his loss,
What Halifax erects thy tomb?
But maybe he who so could draw
The hidden great, the humble wise,
Yielding with them to God's good law,
Makes the Pantheon where he lies.

LORD HOUGHTON.

"I AM not sorry for most people, certainly not for those old and in pain, for whom sleep must be a consoler after the fitful fever. . . . Little children step off this earth into the infinite and we tear our hearts out over their sweet cold hands and smiling faces, that drop indifferent when you cease holding them, and smile as the lid is closing over them. I don't think we deplore the old who have had enough of living and striving and have buried so many others, and must be weary of living—it seems time for them to go—for where's the pleasure of staying when the feast is over, and the flowers withered, and the guests gone? Isn't it better to blow the light out than sit on among the broken meats and collapsed jellies and vapid heeltaps? I go—to what I don't know—but to God's next world, which is His and He made it. One paces up and down the shore yet awhile—and looks towards the unknown ocean, and thinks of the traveller whose boat sailed yesterday. Those we love can but walk down to the pier with us—the voyage we must make alone. Except for the young or very happy, I can't say I am sorry for any one who dies."

WILLIAM MAKEPEACE THACKERAY.

WILLIAM MAKEPEACE THACKERAY.

Now that his noble form is clay,
One word for good old Thackeray,
One word for gentle Thackeray,
Spite of his disbelieving eye,
True Thackeray — a man who would not lie.

Among his fellows he was peer
For any gentleman that ever was;
And if the lordling stood in fear
Of the rebuke of that satiric pen,
Or if the good man sometimes gave a tear
They both were moved by equal laws,
They loved and hated him with honest cause;
'Twas Nature's truth that touched the men.

Oh nights of Addison and Steele,
And Swift and all those men, return!
Oh, for some writer, now, to make me feel!
Oh, for some talker that can bid me burn!
Like Him, with His majestic power
Of pathos mix'd with terrible attack,
And probing into records of the Past,
Through some enchanted hour,
To show the white and black,
And what did not — and what deserved to last!

Poet and Scholar, 'tis in vain
We summon thee from those dim Halls
Where only Death is absolute and holds unquestioned reign.
Even Shakspeare must go downward in His dust,—
And lie with all the rest of us in rust,—
And mould and gloom and mildewed tomb
(Mildewed or May-dewed, evermore a tomb)
Yet hoping still above our skies
To have his humble place among the Just.

And so "Hic jacet" — that is all
That can be writ or said or sung
Of him who held in such a thrall
With his melodious gift of pen and tongue
Both nations — old and young.

Honor's a hasty word to speak,
But now I say it solemnly and slow
To the One Englishman most like that Greek
Who wrote "The Clouds" two thousand years ago.

THOMAS WILLIAM PARSONS.

IN MEMORIAM.

It has been desired by some of the personal friends of the great writer who established the *Cornhill Magazine*, that its brief record of his having been stricken from among men should be written by the old comrade and brother in arms who pens these lines, and of whom he often wrote himself, and always with the warmest generosity.

I saw him first, nearly twenty-eight years ago, when he proposed to become the illustrator of my earliest book. I saw him last, shortly before Christmas, at the Athenæum Club, when he told me that he had been in bed three days — that, after these attacks, he was troubled with cold shiverings, "which quite took the power of work out of him" — and that he had it in his mind to try a new remedy which he laughingly described. He was very cheerful, and looked very bright. In the night of that day week he died.

The long interval between those two periods is marked in my remembrance of him by many occasions when he was supremely humorous, when he was irresistibly extravagant, when he was softened and serious,

when he was charming with children. But by none do I recall him more tenderly than by two or three that start out of the crowd, when he unexpectedly presented himself in my room, announcing how that some passage in a certain book had made him cry yesterday, and how that he had come to dinner, "because he couldn't help it," and must talk such passage over. No one can ever have seen him more genial, natural, cordial, fresh, and honestly impulsive, than I have seen him at those times. No one can be surer than I, of the greatness and goodness of the heart that then disclosed itself.

We had our differences of opinion. I thought that he too much feigned a want of earnestness, and that he made a pretense of undervaluing his art, which was not good for the art that he held in trust. But when we fell upon these topics, it was never very gravely, and I have a lively image of him in my mind, twisting both his hands in his hair, and stamping about, laughing, to make an end of the discussion.

When we were associated in remembrance of the late Mr. Douglas Jerrold, he delivered a public lecture in London, in the course of

which he read his very best contribution to *Punch*, describing the grown-up cares of a poor family of young children. No one hearing him could have doubted his natural gentleness, or his thoroughly unaffected manly sympathy with the weak and lowly. He read the paper most pathetically, and with a simplicity of tenderness that certainly moved one of his audience to tears. This was presently after his standing for Oxford, from which place he had dispatched his agent to me, with a droll note (to which he afterward added a verbal postscript), urging me to "come down and make a speech, and tell them who he was, for he doubted whether more than two of the electors had ever heard of him, and he thought there might be as many as six or eight who had heard of me." He introduced the lecture just mentioned, with a reference to his late electioneering failure, which was full of good sense, good spirits, and good humour.

He had a particular delight in boys, and an excellent way with them. I remember his once asking me with fantastic gravity, when he had been to Eton where my eldest son then was, whether I felt as he did in

regard of never seeing a boy without wanting instantly to give him a sovereign? I thought of this when I looked down into his grave, after he was laid there, for I looked down into it over the shoulder of a boy to whom he had been kind.

These are slight remembrances; but it is to little familiar things suggestive of the voice, look, manner, never, never more to be encountered on this earth, that the mind first turns in a bereavement. And greater things that are known of him, in the way of his warm affections, his quiet endurance, his unselfish thoughtfulness for others, and his munificent hand may not be told.

If, in the reckless vivacity of his youth, his satirical pen had ever gone astray or done amiss, he had caused it to prefer its own petition for forgiveness, long before:

> I've writ the foolish fancy of his brain;
> The aimless jest that, striking, hath caused pain;
> The idle word that he'd wish back again.

In no pages should I take it upon myself at this time to discourse of his books, of his refined knowledge of character, of his subtle acquaintance with the weaknesses of human

nature, of his delightful playfulness as an essayist, of his quaint and touching ballads, of his mastery over the English language. Least of all, in these pages, enriched by his brilliant qualities from the first of the series, and beforehand accepted by the Public through the strength of his great name.

But, on the table before me, there lies all that he had written of his latest and last story. That it would be very sad to any one — that it is inexpressibly so to a writer — in its evidences of matured designs never to be accomplished, of intentions begun to be executed and destined never to be completed, of careful preparation for long roads of thought that he was never to traverse, and for shining goals that he was never to reach, will be readily believed. The pain, however, that I have felt in perusing it, has not been deeper than the conviction that he was in the healthiest vigour of his powers when he wrought in this last labour. In respect of earnest feeling, far-seeing purpose, character, incident, and a certain loving picturesqueness blending the whole, I believe it to be much the best of all his works. That he fully meant it to be so,

that he had become strongly attached to it, and that he bestowed great pains upon it, I trace in almost every page. It contains one picture which must have cost him extreme distress, and which is a masterpiece. There are two children in it, touched with a hand as loving and tender as ever a father caressed his little child with. There is some young love, as pure and innocent and pretty as the truth. And it is very remarkable that, by reason of the singular construction of the story, more than one main incident usually belonging to the end of such a fiction is anticipated in the beginning, and thus there is an approach to completeness in the fragment, as to the satisfaction of the reader's mind concerning the most interesting persons, which could hardly have been better attained if the writer's breaking-off had been foreseen.

The last line he wrote, and the last proof he corrected, are among these papers through which I have so sorrowfully made my way. The condition of the little pages of manuscript where Death stopped his hand, shows that he had carried them about, and often taken them out of his pocket here and there,

for patient revision and interlineation. The last words he corrected in print, were, "And my heart throbbed with an exquisite bliss." God grant that on that Christmas Eve when he laid his head back on his pillow and threw up his arms as he had been wont to do when very weary, some consciousness of duty done and Christian hope throughout life humbly cherished, may have caused his own heart so to throb, when he passed away to his Redeemer's rest!

He was found peacefully lying as above described, composed, undisturbed, and to all appearance asleep, on the twenty-fourth of December, 1863. He was only in his fifty-third year; so young a man, that the mother who blessed him in his first sleep blessed him in his last. Twenty years before, he had written, after being in a white squall:

> And when, its force expended,
> The harmless storm was ended,
> And, as the sunrise splendid
> Came blushing o'er the sea;
> I thought, as day was breaking,
> My little girls were waking,
> And smiling, and making
> A prayer at home for me.

Those little girls had grown to be women when the mournful day broke that saw their father lying dead. In those twenty years of companionship with him, they had learned much from him; and one of them has a literary course before her, worthy of her famous name.

On the bright wintry day, the last but one of the old year, he was laid in his grave at Kensal Green, there to mingle the dust to which the mortal part of him had returned, with that of a third child, lost in her infancy, years ago. The heads of a great concourse of his fellow-workers in the Arts were bowed around his tomb.

CHARLES DICKENS.

THACKERAY'S DEATH.

THIS great writer—our greatest novelist since Scott (and in some senses greater, because deeper, more to the quick, more *naked* than he), our foremost wit and man of letters since Macaulay—has been taken from us with an awful unexpectedness. He was found dead in bed on the morning of 24th December, 1863. This is to us so great a personal as well as public calamity, that we feel little able to order our words aright or to see through our blinding tears.

Mr. Thackeray was so much greater, so much nobler than his works, great and noble as they are, that it is difficult to speak of him without apparent excess. What a loss to the world the disappearance of that large, acute, and fine understanding; that searching, inevitable inner and outer eye; that keen and yet kindly satiric touch; that wonderful humour and play of soul! And then such a mastery of his mother tongue! such a style! such nicety of word and turn! such a flavour of speech! such genuine originality of genius and expression! such an insight into the hidden springs of human action! such a dissection of the nerves to their ultimate

fibrillæ! such a sense and such a sympathy for the worth and for the misery of man! such a power of bringing human nature to its essence, — detecting at once its basic goodness and vileness, its compositeness! In this subtle, spiritual analysis of men and women, as we see them and live with them; in this power of detecting the enduring passions and desires, the strengths, the weaknesses, and the deceits of the race, from under the mask of ordinary worldly and town life, — making a dandy or a dancing-girl as real, as 'moving delicate and full of life,' as the most heroic incarnations of good and evil; in this vitality and yet lightness of handling, doing it once and for ever, and never a touch too little or too much, — in all these respects he stood and stands alone and matchless. He had a crystalline translucency of thought and language; there was no mistaking or missing his meaning. It was like the finest etching, done with a needle and bitten in with the best *aqua-fortis*, — the *manière* incisive to perfection; while, when needed, he could rise to the full diapason of passion and lofty declamation: and this was not the less striking from being

rare and brief, like a flash of close lightning with its thunder quick and short.

Besides his wit, his quiet, scrupulous, and unerring eye, his proper satiric gifts, his amazing faculty of making his men and women talk each in their own voice and tongue, so that you know them before they are named, Mr. Thackeray had, as the condition under which all these acted, a singularly truthful, strong, and roomy understanding. There was an immense quantity, not less than the finest quality of mind in everything he said. You felt this when with him and when you measured with your eye his enormous brain.

His greatest work, one of the great masterpieces of genius in our, or indeed in any language, without doubt, is *Vanity Fair*.

This set him at once and by a bound in the first rank of fiction. One returns again and again to it, with its freshness, its depth, and terrible truth and power, its easy yet exquisite characterisation, its living talk, its abounding wit and fun.

We remember how, at the dinner given to him many years ago here, the chairman (Lord Neaves), with equal felicity and truth,

said that two of Mr. Thackeray's master powers were *satire* and *sympathy*, — for without both of them he would not have been all that he peculiarly was.

It should never be forgotten that his specific gift was creative satire, — not caricature, nor even sarcasm, nor sentiment, nor romance, nor even character as such, — but the delicate satiric treatment of human nature in its most superficial aspects as well as in its inner depths, by a great-hearted, and tender and genuine sympathy, unsparing, truthful, inevitable, but with love and the love of goodness and true loving-kindness over-arching and indeed animating it all. It was well said by Brimley, in his subtle and just estimate of our great author in his Essays, that he could not have painted 'Vanity Fair as he has, unless Eden had been shining in his inner eye.' It was this sense of an all-perfect good, of a strict goodness laid upon each one of us as an unescapable law, it was this glimpse into the Paradise, not lost, of the lovely and the pure, which quickened his fell insight into the vileness, the vanity, the shortcomings, the pitifulness of us all, of himself not less

than of any son of time. But as we once heard him say, he was created with a sense of the ugly, of the odd, of the meanly false, the desperately wicked; he laid them bare: them under all disguises he hunted to the death. And is not this something to have done? Something inestimable, though at times dreadful and sharp? It purges the soul by terror and pity.

This, with his truthfulness, his scorn of exaggeration in thought or word, and his wide, deep, living sympathy for the entire round of human wants and miseries, goes far to make his works in the best, because a practical sense, wholesome, moral, honest, and of 'good report.'

It is needless to enumerate his works. We not only all know and possess them,—they *possess us;* for are not Becky Sharp, Colonel Newcome, Major Pendennis, the Little Sister and Jeames, the Mulligan, and the terrific Deuceace, more really existing and alive in our minds than many men and women we saw yesterday?

Mr. Thackeray had, we believe, all but if not entirely, finished a novel which was to appear in the *Cornhill* next spring. It will

be a sad pleasure to read the last words of the great genius and artist to whom we owe so much of our best entertainment.

He had a genuine gift of drawing. The delicious Book of Snobs is poor without his own woodcuts; and he not only had the eye and the faculty of a draughtsman, he was one of the best of art critics. He had the true instinct and relish, and the nicety and directness, necessary for just as well as high criticism: the white light of his intellect found its way into this as into every region of his work. We should not forget his verses,—he would have laughed if they had been called poems; but they have more imaginative *vis*, more daintiness of phrase, more true sensibility and sense, than much that is called so both by its authors and the public. We all know the abounding fun and drollery of his 'Battle of Limerick,' the sweet humour and rustic Irish loveliness of 'Peg of Limavaddy,' and the glorified cockneyism of 'Jacob Omnium's 'Oss.' 'The Ballad of Eliza Davis,' and the joys and woes of 'Pleaceman X,' we all know; but not so many know the pathetic depth, the dreamy, unforgetting tenderness, of the 'Ballad of

Bouillabaisse,' 'The White Squall,' and 'The End of the Play,' — the last written, strangely as it now reads, for Christmas 1848, this day fifteen years ago. From it we take the following mournful and exquisite lines: —

'I 'd say we suffer and we strive,
Not less nor more as men than boys;
With grizzled beards at forty-five,
As erst at twelve in corduroys.
And if, in time of sacred youth,
We learned at home to love and pray,
Pray Heaven that early Love and Truth
May never wholly pass away.

And in the world, as in the school,
I 'd say, how fate may change and shift;
The prize be sometimes with the fool,
The race not always to the swift.
The strong may yield, the good may fall,
The great man be a vulgar clown,
The knave be lifted over all,
The kind cast pitilessly down.

. . . . . .

We bow to Heaven that willed it so,
That darkly rules the fate of all,
That sends the respite or the blow,
That 's free to give, or to recall.

. . . . . .

So each shall mourn, in life's advance,
Dear hopes, dear friends, untimely killed;
Shall grieve for many a forfeit chance
And longing passion unfulfilled.

Amen! whatever fate be sent,
Pray God the heart may kindly glow,
Although the head with cares be bent,
And whitened with the winter snow.

Come wealth or want, come good or ill,
Let young and old accept their part,
And bow before the Awful Will,
And bear it with an honest heart.

. . . . . .

My song, save this, is little worth;
I lay the weary pen aside,
And wish you health, and love, and mirth,
As fits the solemn Christmas-tide.
As fits the holy Christmas birth,
Be this, good friends, our carol still—
Be peace on earth, be peace on earth,
To men of gentle will.'

Gentle and sacred as these words are, they are as much an essential part of their author's nature as that superfluity of naughtiness, the Marquis of Steyne, in *Vanity Fair*, or the elder and truly infernal Deuceace, or the drunken and savage parson, in *Philip*. It was no ordinary instrument which embraced so much, and no ordinary master who could so sound its chords.

Mr. Thackeray had a warm heart to Edinburgh. It was here he took courage from the cordial, appreciative reception he got

when he lectured here, and he always returned to us with renewed relish. Many of us will now think over with a new and deeper interest — the interest of the sudden grave and the irrevocable and imperishable past — on those pleasant times when he read his 'Wit and Humour' and his 'Curate's Walk,' and, with a solemn tenderness, simplicity, and perfectness, such as it is now hopeless ever again to hear, read to us 'The spacious firmament on high,' and Johnson's noble and touching lines on poor Levett.

We know of no death in the world of letters since Macaulay's which will make so many mourners, — for he was a faithful friend. No one, we believe, will ever know the amount of true kindness and help, given often at a time when kindness cost much, to nameless, unheard-of suffering. A man of spotless honour, of the strongest possible home affections, of the most scrupulous truthfulness of observation and of word, we may use for him his own words to his 'faithful old gold pen': —

> 'Nor pass the words as idle phrases by;
> Stranger! I never writ a flattery,
> Nor signed the page that registered a lie.'

He has joined the immortals; for we may say of him, what we can say of few, — he is already and for ever classic. He is beyond the fear of forgetfulness or change, for he has enshrined his genius in a style crystalline, strong, beautiful, and enduring. There was much of many great men in him, — of Montaigne, Le Sage, Swift, and Addison, of Steele, and Goldsmith, of Fielding, Molière, and Charles Lamb; but there was more of himself than of all others. As a work of art, his *Esmond* is probably the most consummate: it is a curious *tour de force*, — a miracle not only of story-telling, but of archaic insight and skill.

The foregoing estimate of his genius must stand instead of any special portraiture of the man. Yet, before concluding, we would mention two leading traits of character traceable, to a large extent, in his works, though finding no appropriate place in a literary criticism of them. One was the deep steady melancholy of his nature. He was fond of telling how on one occasion, at Paris, he found himself in a great crowded *salon;* and looking from the one end across the

sea of heads, being in Swift's place of calm in a crowd,[1] he saw at the other end a strange visage, staring at him with an expression of comical woebegoneness. After a little he found that this rueful being was himself in the mirror. He was not, indeed, morose. He was alive to and thankful for every-day blessings, great and small; for the happiness of home, for friendship, for wit and music, for beauty of all kinds, for the pleasures of the 'faithful old gold pen;' now running into some felicitous expression, now playing itself into some droll initial letter; nay, even for the creature comforts. But his persistent state, especially for the later half of his life, was profoundly *morne*, — there is no other word for it. This arose in part from temperament, from a quick sense of the littleness and wretchedness of mankind. His keen perception of the meanness and vulgarity of the realities around him contrasted with the ideal present to his mind could produce no other effect. This feeling, embittered by disappointment, acting on a harsh and savage nature, ended in the *sæva indignatio* of

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1 'An inch or two above it.'

Swift; acting on the kindly and too sensitive nature of Mr. Thackeray, it led only to compassionate sadness. In part, too, this melancholy was the result of private calamities. He alludes to these often in his writings, and a knowledge that his sorrows were great is necessary to the perfect appreciation of much of his deepest pathos. We allude to them here, painful as the subject is, mainly because they have given rise to stories, — some quite untrue, some even cruelly injurious. The loss of his second child in infancy was always an abiding sorrow, — described in the 'Hoggarty Diamond,' in a passage of surpassing tenderness, too sacred to be severed from its context. A yet keener and more constantly present affliction was the illness of his wife. He married her in Paris when he was 'mewing his mighty youth,' preparing for the great career which awaited him. One likes to think on these early days of happiness, when he could draw and write with that loved companion by his side: he has himself sketched the picture: 'The humblest painter, be he ever so poor, may have a friend watching at his easel, or a gentle wife sitting by with her

work in her lap, and with fond smiles or talk or silence, cheering his labours.' After some years of marriage, Mrs. Thackeray caught a fever, brought on by imprudent exposure at a time when the effects of such ailments are more than usually lasting both on the system and the nerves. She never afterwards recovered so as to be able to be with her husband and children. But she has been from the first intrusted to the good offices of a kind family, tenderly cared for, surrounded with every comfort by his unwearied affection. The beautiful lines in the ballad of the 'Bouillabaisse' are well known:—

'Ah me! how quick the days are flitting!
I mind me of a time that 's gone,
When here I 'd sit as now I 'm sitting,
In this same place — but not alone.
A fair young form was nestled near me,
A dear, dear face looked fondly up,
And sweetly spoke and smiled to cheer me
— There 's no one now to share my cup.'

In one of the latest Roundabouts we have this touching confession: 'I own for my part that, in reading pages which this hand penned formerly, I often lose sight of the text under my eyes. It is not the words I

see; but that past day; that bygone page of life's history; that tragedy, comedy it may be, which our little home-company was enacting; that merry-making which we shared; that funeral which we followed; that bitter, bitter grief which we buried.' But all who knew him know well, and love to recall, how these sorrows were soothed and his home made a place of happiness by his two daughters and his mother, who were his perpetual companions, delights, and blessings, and whose feeling of inestimable loss now will be best borne and comforted by remembering how they were everything to him, as he was to them.

His sense of a higher Power, his reverence and godly fear, is felt more than expressed — as indeed it mainly should always be — in everything he wrote. It comes out at times quite suddenly, and stops at once, in its full strength. We could readily give many instances of this. One we give, as it occurs very early, when he was probably little more than six-and-twenty; it is from the paper, *Madame Sand and the New Apocalypse*. Referring to Henri Heine's frightful words, '*Dieu qui se meurt*,' '*Dieu est mort*,' and to

the wild godlessness of *Spiridion*, he thus bursts out: 'O awful, awful name of God! Light unbearable! Mystery unfathomable! Vastness immeasurable! Who are these who come forward to explain the mystery, and gaze unblinking into the depths of the light, and measure the immeasurable vastness to a hair? O name, that God's people of old did fear to utter! O light, that God's prophet would have perished had he seen! Who are these that are now so familiar with it?' In ordinary intercourse the same sudden '*Te Deum*' would occur, always brief and intense, like lightning from a cloudless heaven; he seemed almost ashamed, — not of it, but of his giving it expression.

We cannot resist here recalling one Sunday evening in December, when he was walking with two friends along the Dean Road, to the west of Edinburgh — one of the noblest outlets to any city. It was a lovely evening, — such a sunset as one never forgets; a rich dark bar of cloud hovered over the sun, going down behind the Highland hills, lying bathed in amethystine bloom; between this cloud and the hills there was a narrow slip of the pure ether, of

a tender cowslip colour, lucid, and as if it were the very body of heaven in its clearness; every object standing out as if etched upon the sky. The north-west end of Corstorphine Hill, with its trees and rocks, lay in the heart of this pure radiance, and there a wooden crane, used in the quarry below, was so placed as to assume the figure of a cross; there it was, unmistakable, lifted up against the crystalline sky. All three gazed at it silently. As they gazed, he gave utterance in a tremulous, gentle, and rapid voice, to what all were feeling, in the word 'CALVARY!' The friends walked on in silence, and then turned to other things. All that evening he was very gentle and serious, speaking, as he seldom did, of divine things,—of death, of sin, of eternity, of salvation; expressing his simple faith in God and in his Saviour.

There is a passage at the close of the 'Roundabout Paper,' No. XXIII., *De Finibus*, in which a sense of the ebb of life is very marked: the whole paper is like a soliloquy. It opens with a drawing of Mr. Punch, with unusually mild eye, retiring for the night; he is putting out his high-heeled

shoes, and before disappearing gives a wistful look into the passage, as if bidding it and all else good-night. He will be in bed, his candle out, and in darkness in five minutes, and his shoes found next morning at his door, the little potentate all the while in his final sleep. The whole paper is worth the most careful study; it reveals not a little of his real nature, and unfolds very curiously the secret of his work, the vitality, and abiding power of his own creations: how he 'invented a certain *Costigan*, out of scraps, heel-taps, odds and ends of characters,' and met the original the other day, without surprise, in a tavern parlour. The following is beautiful: 'Years ago I had a quarrel with a certain well-known person (I believed a statement regarding him which his friends imparted to me, and which turned out to be quite incorrect). To his dying day that quarrel was never quite made up. I said to his brother, "Why is your brother's soul still dark against me? *It is I who ought to be angry and unforgiving, for I was in the wrong!*"' *Odisse quem læseris* was never better contravened. But what we chiefly refer to now is the profound pensiveness of

the following strain, as if written with a presentiment of what was not then very far off: 'Another Finis written; another milestone on this journey from birth to the next world. Sure it is a subject for solemn cogitation. Shall we continue this story-telling business, and be voluble to the end of our age?' 'Will it not be presently time, O prattler, to hold your tongue?' And thus he ends:—

'Oh, the sad old pages, the dull old pages; oh, the cares, the *ennui*, the squabbles, the repetitions, the old conversations over and over again! But now and again a kind thought is recalled, and now and again a dear memory. Yet a few chapters more, and then the last; after which, behold Finis itself comes to an end, and the Infinite begins.'

He sent the proof of this paper to his 'dear neighbours,' in Onslow Square (Sir Theodore and Lady Martin), to whom he owed so much almost daily pleasure, with his corrections, the whole of the last paragraph in manuscript, and above a first sketch of it also in MS., which is fuller and more impassioned. His fear of 'enthu-

siastic writing' had led him, we think, to sacrifice somthing of the sacred power of his first words, which we give with its interlineations:—

'Another Finis, another slice of life which *Tempus edax* has devoured! And I may have to write the word once or twice perhaps, and then an end of Ends. ~~Finite is over, and Infinite beginning.~~ Oh the troubles, disputes, the cares, the *ennui*, the ~~complications~~, the repetitions, the old conversations over and over again, and here and there and oh the delightful passages, the dear, the brief, the forever remembered ~~And then~~ A few chapters more, and then the last, and then behold Finis itself coming to an end and the Infinite beginning!'

How like music this,— like one trying the same air in different ways; as it were, searching out and sounding all its depths. 'The dear, the brief, the for ever remembered;' these are like a bar out of Beethoven, deep and melancholy as the sea! He had been suffering on Sunday from an old and cruel enemy. He fixed with his friend and surgeon to come again on Tuesday; but with

that dread of anticipated pain, which is a common condition of sensibility and genius, he put him off with a note from 'yours unfaithfully, W. M. T.' He went out on Wednesday for a little, and came home at ten. He went to his room, suffering much, but declining his man's offer to sit with him. He hated to make others suffer. He was heard moving, as if in pain, about twelve, on the eve of

> 'That the happy morn,
> Wherein the Son of Heaven's eternal King,
> Of wedded maid, and virgin-mother born,
> Our great redemption from above did bring.'

Then all was quiet, and then he must have died — in a moment. Next morning his man went in, and opening the windows found his master dead, his arms behind his head, as if he had tried to take one more breath. We think of him as of our Chalmers; found dead in like manner; the same childlike, unspoiled open face; the same gentle mouth; the same spaciousness and softness of nature; the same look of power. What a thing to think of, — his lying there alone in the dark, in the midst of his own mighty London; his mother and his daughters

asleep, and, it may be, dreaming of his goodness. God help them, and us all! What would become of us, stumbling along this our path of life, if we could not, at our utmost need, stay ourselves on Him?

Long years of sorrow, labour, and pain had killed him before his time. It was found after death how little life he had to live. He looked always fresh with that abounding, silvery hair, and his young, almost infantine face, but he was worn to a shadow, and his hands wasted as if by eighty years. With him it is the end of Ends; finite is over, and infinite begun. What we all felt and feel can never be so well expressed as in his own words of sorrow for the early death of Charles Buller:—

'Who knows the inscrutable design?
Blessed be He who took and gave!
Why should your mother, Charles, not mine,
Be weeping at her darling's grave?
We bow to Heaven that willed it so,
That darkly rules the fate of all,
That sends the respite or the blow,
That 's free to give, or to recall.'

JOHN BROWN, M. D.

HERE ends THE BIBELOT Volume Seven. Printed by Smith & Sale for Thomas B. Mosher and published by him at XLV Exchange Street Portland Maine. MDCCCCI.